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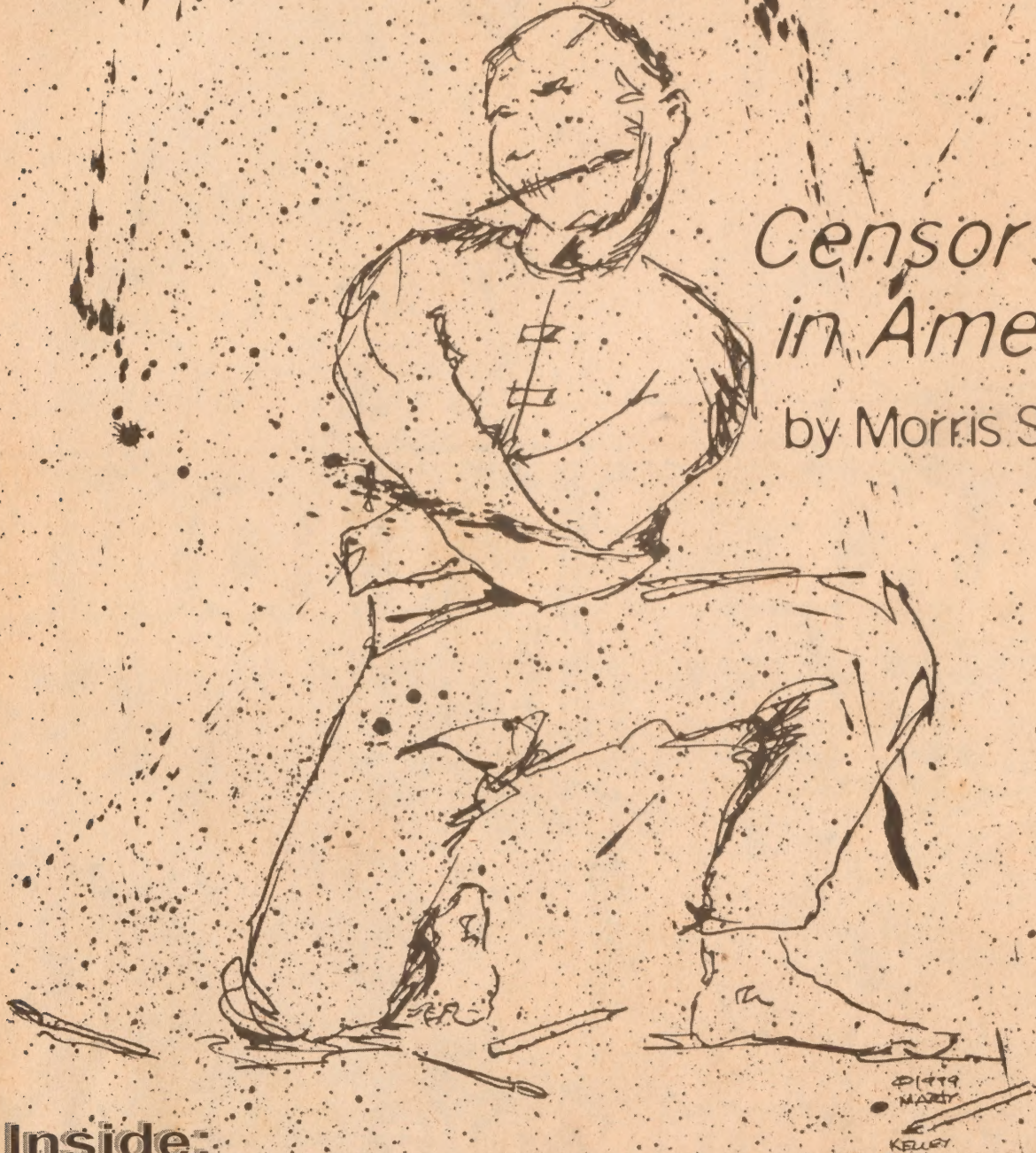
press

#21 - Free

Imprisoning the Mind

Art Censorship in America

by Morris Sullivan



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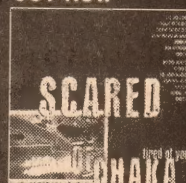
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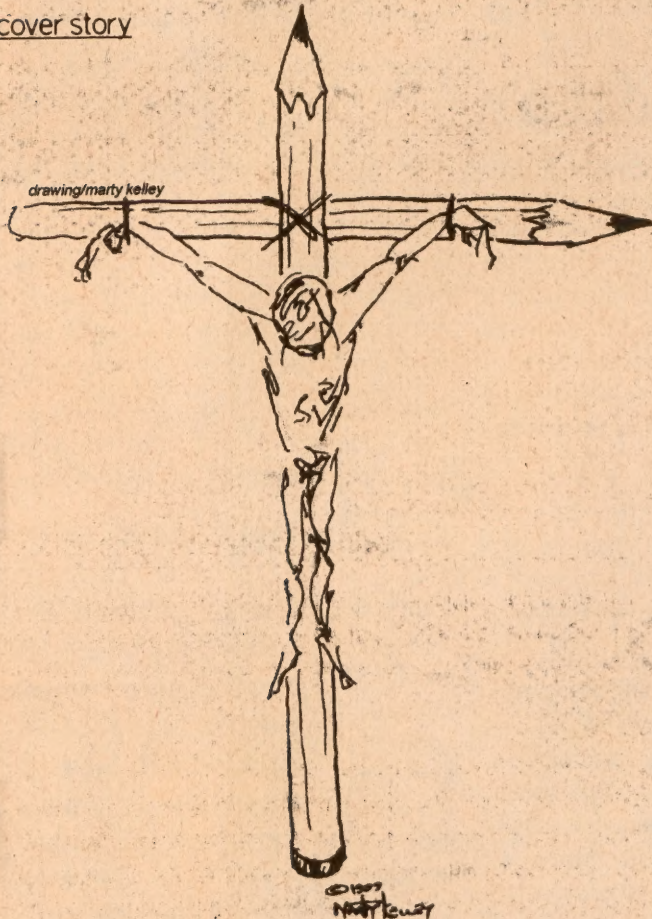
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things within

IMPACT PRESS • ISSUE 21 • JUNE/JULY '99

cover story



IMPRISONING THE MIND ART CENSORSHIP IN AMERICA

by Morris Sullivan

Mike Diana is a comic artist who was found guilty of obscenity for work he had done. Our "free" country all of a sudden seemed a little less free and Diana had to find out the hard way that America has a long way to go before censorship is really a thing of the past. • PAGE 22

"A man can live and be healthy without killing animals for food; therefore, if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite. And to act so is immoral."

"War is a ritual, a deadly ritual, not the result of aggressive self-assertion, but of self-transcending identification. Without loyalty to tribe, church, flag or ideal, there would be no wars."

-- Leo Tolstoy

-- Arthur Koestler

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Fun fact of the Issue: The parents of Dwight D. Eisenhower, who rose to become one of the few five-star generals in U.S. history, were pacifists.

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education." - Thomas Jefferson



From The Editor

Craig Mazer

This issue of IMPACT press features a story revolving around an artist named Mike Diana (page 22). Diana was found guilty of obscenity for comics he did that depicted rather violent, vulgar images. Regardless of the content of his art, it's one of many examples of how America is not the free country it claims to be.

Censorship is a problem all over the world. But the United States of America, with its Freedom of Speech, of Press, of Assembly etc, contradicts itself by often denying these very rights.

The censoring of citizens is the first step to silencing them, to taking away what power they have in a world where the everyday citizen already has too little power - where 13% of the population is below the poverty level and discrimination based on race, sex and sexual orientation still runs rampant.

This is not the country of equality, land of the free, home of the brave. This is America, where you can accomplish only so much before you run into the wall of corporate take-over, sneaky government politics and an empty wallet. Our voice is all we really have. Few of us are rich, run a mega-corporation or hold a seat high in the government. So, we don't have the power allowing us to push aside right and wrong and accomplish whatever we want.

We are limited to our voice, to our words, to our actions.

Americans have become content, though. Activism is passé, at least in the mind of the majority. Despite the fact that most Americans, I imagine, would like to change some things in the world around them, they

are more resigned to complain to co-workers or their significant other rather than go to a city council meeting, write an article, run for political office or join in a protest.

I'm not sure if there is a definitive reason as to why Americans have become so complacent. Maybe it's that America's economic situation is supposedly stable, that (aside from the current conflict in Yugoslavia and the Desert Storm event) there have been no wars to rally around/against or that Americans have finally realized that our government is essentially a boy's club for self-serving politicians.

Regardless, we are Americans and we have rights. These rights are often violated and people rarely speak out. Anytime these rights are violated it becomes a form of censorship, of stopping someone from doing something they are legally allowed to do. Putting restraints on freedoms such as speech and press is one step closer to losing all your rights.

Money aside, though, we have the most powerful tool available - our voices and the ability to organize. Communities need to work together - and I don't mean "community" as in your neighborhood. I mean "community" as in a community of people believing in the same things.

It is time for Americans to seize their power to organize, demonstrate, educate and act. Through tools such as the Internet, free press, public radio, public access radio, activist rallies and demonstrations we can become a much more powerful force than any baloney government.

**The censoring of
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first step to
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in a world where
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Speak Your Mind. . .

Please proof your letters. IMPACT will do the best to decipher them. However, we appreciate your effort to avoid us having to do extra work. Thanks!

IMPACT:

This is an excellent article (Issue #19, "A Review of United States Policy Towards Cuba" by David Mericle). It should be submitted as an op-ed piece to the New York Times and Washington Post if not every major newspaper in the country. It is my experience that the majority of U.S. citizens have not given Cuba much thought. This article would go a long way to change that. This really needs to be widely distributed. Excellent work.

Thank you,
Frank Pratkan

IMPACT:

I am a single mother of a 2 1/2 year old son, we are survivors of domestic violence, his father does not participate in my son's life, this is a blessing.

I am tired of the 'world' thinking I am to be a supermom, do it all but there is little help out there. I am a welfare mom for 2 years, working part time and almost graduating with two bachelor degrees, French and accounting.

The system doesn't work. I found your website (www.impactpress.com) by doing a research paper for accounting class. I chose single moms and welfare.

As you wrote about hating women (Issue #16, "Mind Power" by Patrick Scott Barnes), after all I went through in my trial, I feel the same about men. But reading your article I applaud you for 'understanding' all we do as single mothers. You are very sensitive; the first time I have heard or read that a man understands all my responsibilities.

Thank you again,
Paige Mathison

IMPACT:

In regards to Morris Sullivan's article (Issue #20, "The Chaining of America"), he has done a good job in terms of illustrating the new economic landscape and the bi-

zarre form of "pseudo-capitalism" that has come to dominate it. However, I think he really misses the mark when it comes to the reason that worker morale is so low.

It's not that people don't know who to be loyal to, or who to be motivated for, it's that there is no reason to be loyal or motivated. For more and more people, their wages are declining, they are expected to do more, they are being treated with less respect, and the future is looking less and less hopeful. Sullivan is right about the corporate landscape and its resemblance to the Stalinist state, but fails to mention the vicious cronyism and petty politics being played out by the "new breed" of corporate manager, the one who has little in the way of innovation and skill, who has made his or her way with a lifetime of connections. These connections are developed by endless rounds of "ass-kissing" one's superiors, debasing themselves before them, stroking their egos, making them feel more powerful. The experience, of course, is a degrading one, and those who engage in it naturally feel a need to pass the degradation on, in the form of endless management directives which have no value whatsoever in terms of improved productivity, product quality or customer service. The purpose of these directives is to "make people jump", to give the manager a sense of power, a hollow replacement of his sacrificed dignity.

Perhaps another purpose in all this "memomania" is to provide a source of busywork for the increasingly bloated management sector. Sullivan would do well to look into how, in a time of almost constant labor cutbacks, there are more management personnel than ever, being constantly recycled. You can imagine the effect on the efficiency of American business.

From the average worker's point of view, it's much simpler: he or she is a slave. The corporation is a plantation. The slave has no other place to go but another plantation. The slave is obsessed about his position in relation to his fellow slaves. He can work harder and receive nothing more than an occasional platitude about what a good person he is, or he can ass-kiss and backbite his way into a better slave's position,

where he can get some other slave, a "good person" to do his work for him. While he is jockeying for position he can keep repeating to himself the mantras of our times: "life ain't fair," "nice guys finish last," "I'm lookin' out for numero uno," etc. His only real fulfillment will be waiting for him at home, in the form of a television set, or if he is lucky, a slave-spouse who shares his life of drudgery.

I realize that I'm being pretty simplistic and melodramatic in what I'm saying, but I guess the point I'm trying to get across is this: the next time Mr. Sullivan encounters a bad attitude at the service counter, he should bear in mind that it's a slave's attitude; he has no reason to give a rat's ass about anyone but himself. The next time Mr. Sullivan wonders about the lack of moral responsibility in our nation's labor force, he should bear in mind that it's a slave's morality.

I think that Morris Sullivan could have done better than to title his article "The Chaining of America." A more appropriate title might be: "Plantation U.S.A."

Steve Moutray

Hello IMPACT press:

Hey peepoles. I am Carlos. I live by Atlantic City in New Jersey (never thought your newsletter got all the way up here did ya?) and I want to say that the stuff in these is the damn shit that everyone should be reading about. On the way home tonight, I heard on the bus talk radio about what Morris Sullivan was talking about (Issue #20, "The Chaining of America"). About big ass corps with no thought for service. And the people there were asking for ideas about that. I rushed home to call them, but it was a recorded story. I wanted to tell them about this so bad, but I lost my chance. Anyways, might I suggest since it is a free zine, giving maybe a copy or two to local talk radio stations. You probably thought about that already. Oh well. That's it from me. So thanx again for listening to me. Keep putting out the good stuff. I will keep reading.

-Carlos

Speak Your Mind. . .

Please proof your letters. IMPACT will do the best to decipher them. However, we appreciate your effort to avoid us having to do extra work. Thanks!

Dear IMPACT:

I appreciated your piece "The Chaining of America" in issue #20 (by Morris Sullivan). It presented an interesting perspective to the corporate takeover of America that was much deeper than the usual "corporations suck" rants you see in most zines.

I live in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, a medium-sized city about 2 hours west of Philly in the heart of Amish country. Five years ago there were no Wal-Marts in Lancaster County. I had never even heard of Wal-Mart. Eventually, someone must have realized the travesty of a town our size with no Wal-Marts in it, so round about 1995 Wal-Mart announced that they had plans for 5, count'em, 5 Wal-Marts in the suburban communities surrounding the city, effectively tying the noose around our already suffocating downtown independent businesses.

But then something really amazing happened. Pissed off people who did not want to live next to a Wal-Mart took their concerns to their local governments and planning commissions, who then listened to both sides and determined what was best for each respective community. The end result was that through the changing of zoning, or the refusal to change zoning, 3 out of 5 Wal-Marts were refused permission to build. We still ended up with two too many Wal-Marts, but it proves that with concentrated community action you can fight the likes of Wal-Mart.

That's not to say that Lancaster is some utopia. A few months ago a Home Depot opened less than a quarter-mile from a Builder's Square. Keep supporting independent small business.

Thanks,
John Shuba

Dear IMPACT,

Finished reading the article on how conservative republicans should fess up to their bigoted members (Issue #20, "Mind Power" by Patrick Scott Barnes). While reading this article I realized two things:

1. This website (www.impactpress.com) is no different than 98% of media outlets available to Americans. That is to say it has a huge liberal slant and never addresses other political viewpoints.
2. The fact that the columnist didn't even mention the fact that Robert Byrd's name was brought up contemporaneously with Bob Barr's is shocking. Byrd, a high ranking Democrat was a high ranking member of the KKK for longer than even David Duke.

Now, don't get me wrong I am not a member of the Republican party because frankly I feel they are only interested in creating a theocracy.

Furthermore, Barr, Lott, and Byrd are enormous wastes of human life with no clue.

Democrats on the other hand are nothing more than thinly veiled communists. I mean just look at the agenda of the Democratic party and I see Chairman Mao staring me in the face. I think it's high time that your website bring in people who, like myself, have a more libertarian perspective, because it is the only platform that truly stands for the principles that America was founded on. Democrats and Republicans are killing this country and it's high time your staff recognizes this.

Thank you for your time,
Manny Trejo Jr.

P.S. - I must give the columnist credit for somewhat acknowledging that some Democrats are probably racist.

Editor:

I've been noticing a lot lately this new Vegan movement. It may be a step in the right direction but it seems quite ridiculous. I'm not against being vegetarian, just many people deluding themselves.

For people to completely rid themselves of dependence of animals, many more sacrifices have to be made besides vegetarianism. Items such as wool, leather, dairy and

meat products of animals are only a minute detail.

Very many fertilizers (of animal origin) are used to grow much of the veggies that vegans so enthusiastically eat. Even if these "vegans" have private gardens, what about their clothing? The cotton grown for your clothes was probably grown with animal fertilizer too. They can either run around in polyester like "Saturday Night Fever" or use harmful chemical fertilizers.

Veganism is an interesting concept, however ludicrous. But, let's face it, human's niche in the environment is that of a parasite. We should try to live in harmony with nature, not tag on a cheap label to ourselves. All animals exploit each other in a way. It's not evil. Don't think you're doing anybody a favor with your naive way of life.

Brian Ellison

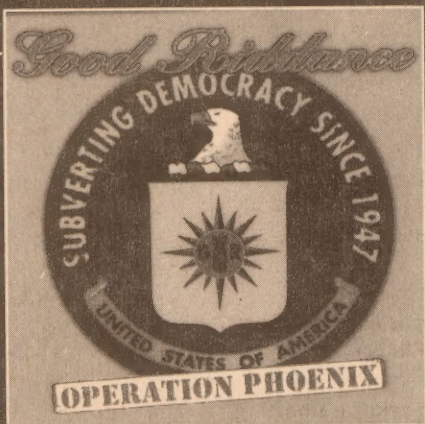
Editor's response: This is the first time, and hopefully the last time, that I will respond to a letter. But this letter is so clueless, misleading and falsely reasoned that I had to say something. I considered not printing it, but I realized that people like Mr. Ellison are numerous and their confused view of veganism needed to be clarified. I'll make this brief. Vegans choose their lifestyle, not only to save animals but also to better their health. Mr. Ellison's argument about fertilizers is a weak attempt to diminish the purpose and the effects of being vegan or vegetarian (besides the fact that not all fertilizers contain animal products). As a human we should, and I quote from Mr. Ellison's letter, "try to live in harmony with nature". There are always limitations in the ways we can help and veganism tries to take it as far as possible, eliminating all animal products to the extent with which one can reasonably do so. If everyone had the attitude Mr. Ellison has ("if you can't do it perfect, completely, totally, why bother?") the world would have been destroyed a long time ago. Realize that as a human, your (and Mr. Ellison's) responsibility is to do all you can, not think up excuses for why you should do nothing. That's called being lazy.

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Notes from the Cultural Wasteland

morris sullivan.



I've written a lot of articles for *Impact* and covered a lot of topics. None of them, to date, have gotten the quantity of response that my feature last month, "The Chaining of America," received. I think that's interesting. Obviously, the place of the corporate world in our culture is important to you, as is, I suppose, your place in that corporate world.

I've been feeling a little guilty about that story, though. You see, I said things in the article that weren't objectively true and complete. They weren't false, they just weren't true, in the sense that when you read, you expect to find accurate, objective reporting of facts. However, when I write for *Impact*, I do so as a critic—in this case a social critic—and critics are inherently inaccurate. Not wrong, necessarily, but for every answer to every question I put forth, there are one or two equally plausible answers.

Criticism is inherently inaccurate because it is inherently subjective. Unlike objective reporting, the facts are mainly there for analysis. A critic, however, sees a picture and must then interpret and evaluate it. He or she must perform that analysis using the tools and experience they bring to the process. Each critic brings with him or her a set of personal experiences through which the topic must be filtered; an agenda about which they wish to proselytize; a desire to be considered interesting and clever by their readers; a desire to please their editor; and, usually, a desire to either be liked by or to piss off the person or institution being critiqued.

Therefore, if you read a dozen different articles about Generation X in the workplace, for example, by a dozen different social critics, you'll get a dozen different, and often conflicting theories about "the problems" and "their solutions." A socialist, for example, might have sounded more like the letter in this issue, in which the writer chastises me for overlooking the "slave mentality" of today's worker. (NOTE: That's a good point. However, social critics from Malthus to Marx have written essentially the same thing over the last couple of centuries, and my desire to be considered clever and interesting led me to focus on those ideas I thought the read-

ers would consider "new.")

On another hand, a religious-right critic might well postulate that the lack of quality in goods and services comes from a falling-away of traditional Christian values and the Puritan work ethic. Steve Allen might have said that the phenomenon occurs because of the "dumbing down" of America. Drucker, Covey, or Crosby might have said that the problems could easily be solved by reading their books or going to their seminars. Jello Biafra would have just ranted and raved. And so on.

Since they sometimes hold a good deal of power over the success, and even survival, of an artist or institution, a critic should be held accountable.

Besides the social criticism I write for *Impact*, I write some arts criticism. That's an interesting process and an fascinating thing to look at from inside the critic's mind, from the point of view of the artist, and as someone with a stake in the success and growth of the performing arts in my community. Having just co-directed a play which received mixed reviews, I've recently had a lot of opportunities to deal with the effects of criticism on the artist. Also, I'll soon have the opportunity to review a new season's worth of theatrical production in a neighboring community, so I'll be dealing with all those subjective elements, too.

Lately, I've heard a lot of comments about critics and criticism, too—mostly from my cast and others around the theatre, but also from friends and acquaintances who read one or more of the reviews. Soon, I'll probably receive comments about my own criticism—mainly from my editor. I probably don't know a lot of the people I'll review, since I leave my stomping grounds for this, but I'll occasionally hear from a mutual friend or get a letter.

One of the comments I hear most often (and this is usually from someone who mainly reads movie reviews): "I read the reviews, and if the critics like something, I don't see it. If they hate it, I do."

A couple of the more interesting things people have said to me about critics include, "I think (arts) criticism is an obsolete throw-back to the days before television. And nobody else gets reviewed; you don't see reviews about doctors or hardware stores—just arts

(CRITICISM, continued on page 46)

THE N-WORD

One day on Massa's Plantation (Wal-Mart), I was talking to a white assistant manager. For those of you who have been following my articles, this is the same guy who still thinks Trent Lott is a great man after I had told him of Lott's ties to a racist organization. The manager told me he had just seen *Life*, the latest Eddie Murphy and Martin Lawrence flick, and asked had I seen it.

I hadn't, but my mother and younger brother had.

Then, he told me about the African-American actors usage of the n-word (nigger).

"Now, why is it," he started, "that you guys can use the n-word, but white people can't?"

Despite the fact that this guy is a staunch Republican, I always get along with him. We're almost the same age, have almost the same sense of humor and have a respect for each other's differences. So, when this question came out of his mouth, I wasn't shocked or offended. I just saw this as a friend asking another friend a question.

"Why would you want to say it?" I asked.

"No," he answered, "I don't want to say it. I'm just curious."

"Those that complain about it usually want to say it."

Really, I just said this to get a rise out of him.

"No, that's not true."

"Yes, it is. You must want to say it."

"I just don't think it's right that you guys can say it but white people can't. That's wrong."

I was enjoying this. This was one of those few times in which I had the upper hand on whitey. I had control on what the white man can and cannot call me. It was a guilty pleasure. Still, it felt good.

"Well," I said, "don't white people call other white people cracker? That's what they call native Floridians. I always hear them talkin' about the Florida cracker culture."

"That's different."

We were interrupted by a customer and went our separate ways. He went back to work. I went home.

Later, I told my mother about the conversation I had at work.

"Yea," she said, "they were using that word."

When I hear other blacks use the n-word, I am not offended. Usually, blacks use it in non-white supremacist terms to describe a dumb ass member of the black race. Also, they use it as a synonym for the word brother.

There are some instances where some blacks use it out of self-hatred. For a black to hate his or her own people is nothing but self-hatred.

One black friend of mine never uses the n-word in a positive manner. Most of the times, it's always something negative. I often wonder if he includes himself when he talks about how "niggas" is.

One thing that definitely irks me is when brothas use it in front

of white folks.

That's a no-no in the black community. Maybe we can say it on the rap records.

Maybe we can say it in the movies or on the stage, but no way in hell is a brotha supposed to call another brotha a nigger right in front of white folks.

The reason for this is if someone white hears you saying it, they think they can say it, too. No matter how down they are, it's asswhuppin' time when whites say it. Black folks still can't take a white person using the n-word.

White folks saying the n-word brings back all the history of being considered less than human. Ever since slavery, a nigger was considered stupid. Nowadays, a nigger is a lazy, unpatriotic, violent criminal.....with a big dick.

Even if the stereotypes may have changed, there is still nothing lower than a nigger in this society. Even the filthiest, inbred, redneck, trailer park living, white trash is considered higher than a nigger. No matter how many kids they have from their cousins, trailer park white folks can always look down on the nigger and be happy that they are white.

This is why I have problems with some of them on Massa's Plantation. Not only am I forced to give them customer service, I also have to work with some of them, too.

Another reason why the n-word is less harmful coming from other blacks is the pronunciation of the word. Usually, blacks say nig-guhs. Whites say nig-gers. The "ger" is what makes it asswhuppin' time.

I remember being at a pool party. An older white guy was lecturing two black friends and I.

"You see," he starts, "a nigger can be any color. White, black....it doesn't matter."

"You mean to tell me," my friend, Ross, started, "that if someone told you that a group of niggers was round the corner, you wouldn't think they were black?"

That silenced that discussion.

I was glad Ross asked the question. I have heard this kind of talk too many times. I heard it right along with the "there's niggers and there's black people."

Slur words aren't to be intellectualized; the n-word was used to dehumanize and disgrace one group of people, black folks.

The reason black folks started saying it was to take the pain out of it, to take the word and twist it to where it means something positive. That something positive could be a rap group called Niggers With Attitudes or a blaxploitation film called the Legend of

(N-word, continued on page 46)

mind power



your world

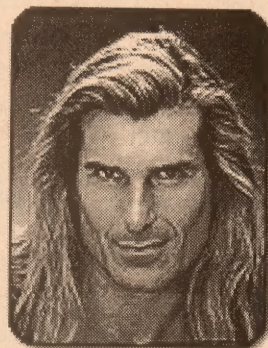
the News revisited
by Sean Helton

I thought we passed a bill to end frivolous law suits. I remember some pudgy, balding man on TV asking us all to vote for amendment "X" which would put an end to paltry court cases in Florida. Apparently that law didn't make it or they're having trouble agreeing on what is flimsy and what has merit. Either that, or a few cases were "grandfathered" in. For example, the family of Charles Cobb sued The Weather Channel in June of 1998 for giving an "incomplete forecast." Cobb allegedly watched the station and saw a storm-free forecast so he left his home on the fateful boat trip. Unfortunately, a storm developed and Cobb was killed at sea. His family claimed the station had a contractual obligation to provide correct weather information in a timely manner and was negligent in doing so. I can understand a family's desperation in a time like this, but how far must you go? It's a PREDICTION, people!!! There is no guarantee. Anytime you go out, especially in a boat, you take your life into your own hands. So if I go to the beach and it's cloudy, can I sue because I don't get a tan?! Luckily, the case was thrown out. In France they like to go to desperate measures as well. Grape growers (wine producers) in southwestern France were planning to sue the national weather service for failing to predict violent hail storms that devastated thousands of vines. The farmers said the weather service did a poor job of predicting the storms and caused the farmers to have the losses. Look, sometimes in life you get dealt a bad hand. There's nothing you can do about it and you just have to make lemonade. Weather is unpredictable. One of my resolutions this past January was to stop watching the weather broadcasts because I realized I actually got upset when the forecasters were wrong. I haven't watched it once this year and I haven't missed a beat. Try it, it's an eye-opener. You'll be surprised at how many people get upset about the forecasts not coming to pass.

In non-weather-related news, a former University of Washington quarterback has sued his ex-coach for hurting his chances to play professionally. Shane Fortnay sued his former coach, Jim Lambright, claiming

Lambright mishandled Fortnay's knee injury in 1996. Fortnay sustained the injury in a game and claims Lambright asked him to practice too quickly after the injury, causing further damage. Trainers on staff at the time, however, said the injury was handled in a routine manner and Fortnay was not rushed in practicing. Fortnay eventually lost his starting QB job and transferred to Northern Iowa to play the position there. That, of course, begs the question: How could he play at all if it was so heavily damaged? This is another case of a desperate person. Fortnay wasn't as talented as he thought himself to be. He lost his starting QB job at Washington to Brock Huard who, although is a much better player, still isn't fantastic. At Northern Iowa Fortnay was average at best. His only real competition came against the University of Iowa, when his team was decimated 66-0. Fortnay threw for 179 yards, was 19 for 40, and had four interceptions. Like most athletes, he probably banked on making it to the NFL and is now faced with the realization that studying didn't matter much to him in school. Hopefully this case will be thrown out as well.

Amusement parks have been in the news lately. Universal Studios Florida has expanded and recently opened its "Islands of Adventure" park. Sea World announced they will be making a huge expansion soon as well. But perhaps the best story from any theme park came in April when Busch Gardens Virginia opened their new roller coaster, "Apollo's Chariot." To celebrate this new ride the park reserved the "services" of male superbimbo, Fabio. Unfortunately, the opening didn't go as smoothly as expected, as Fabio's beak collided with that of a flying goose while the ride was in progress. Fabio suffered a one-inch gash above his nose, which won't help to de-accent his most prominent feature. However, the stud du jour wasn't going to just walk away. Instead he lashed out at the park and blamed them for building the roller coaster too close to a goose-inhabited lake. Hey, Fab, (can I call you Fab?) nature is out there. Unless you build the ride in a dome you're going to have that risk. And even then, what if a gnat flies in your eye and scratches your retina? Then what?! Though he may have had some kind of message, it just doesn't play well coming from him, especially knowing he was going back to his posh Beverly Hills home to recuperate. For a guy that's best known for being well known, it seems he should have taken his lump and gone home. Yet in typical limelight-craving fashion, he had to get that photo op. It worked — he received hundreds of well-wishing cards from lonely housewives.



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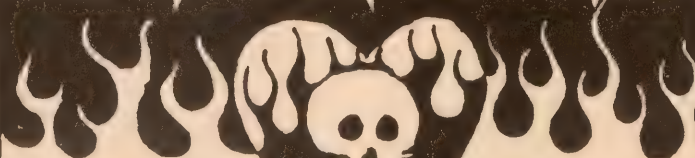


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I remember painfully clearly a time when I was really bored at work. There was a small knife sitting in the office, and I amused myself by throwing the knife into a corkboard, retrieving it, and throwing it again. I suppose it was one of those "it's fun until

Pain and the human race

someone loses an eye" type of things. I ended up falling victim

to that ageless maxim, for as I retrieved the knife a final time, I gripped it incorrectly. The business end of the knife ended up cutting its way into the flesh at the base of my pinky, causing a near-immediate outpouring of the blue chemicals in my body, which instantly changed to red upon contact with the oxygen in the atmosphere. Through the new opening, I could see the sliced innards of my cartilage, which was truly fascinating and horrifying at the same time. I felt faint as I glanced upon the rare vista of the opposite side of my skin. It is seldom we have experiences like that which can illustrate with keen detail the vulnerability of the human body.

Ironically enough, the next day I went to see *Braveheart*. As I watched the visual representation of hundreds of Scots and English being skewered and disemboweled, I began to gain a new appreciation for the level of gore in the film. I don't think it would have had as profound an effect on me, that is, to understand the sacrifices that people have made in wartime, had I not sliced my finger.

We are fragile, delicate creatures, us homo sapiens... yet since the dawn of human history, we have recklessly let our consciousness slip into one of hardness and lack of empathy for our fellow biped. Recently in the course of human events, the hardness has reached earth-destroying levels.

It seems an in-

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sanely misguided pursuit to devise tools whose sole purpose is to disrupt the flow of necessary constituent elements within another human being... sadistic, even. Swords, bows and arrows, napalm, cannons, guns... all designed to make holes in the organs of living things. Regardless of the senselessness, we've invented them; objects which can inflict physical harm on the body more quickly and with greater brutality. As these tools shift their way into the hands of cowards and tyrants, the rest of us are filled with an overwhelming fear and mistrust, which only compounds as the acts of violence escalate. We fear and mistrust not only the cowards and tyrants, but everyone. After all, anyone could turn out to be a coward or tyrant in disguise. It is a self-feeding system that is never satiated.

Now that weapons are commonplace, a strange sort of acceptance has crept into our

minds. Violent thought enters the mainstream. I'm no exception. I love a good explosion as much as the next guy. I love watching in delight as my *Doom* victims scream in agony, falling to the ground mortally wounded. It's hard to say whether it's the chicken or the egg that has propagated this love of conflict, whether violent humans create violence, or if violence creates violent humans. All I can say for sure is that violence has become a giant video game, devoid of perceived consequences and disgust.

Most of us realize the difference between the world of violent fantasy and reality, but the unrealistic nature of fantasy violence can make it seem as though humans are disposable annoyances, not complex, dynamic, passionate beings. I'm somewhat of a different breed. As I watched Gary Oldman expertly end the lives of fifty men in *Air Force One*, I watched the falling bodies pile up and thought of all the fictional families that were now fatherless. I doubt that silly thought entered the mind of the desensitized average American.

This overexposure to violence, coupled with the anger toward corporate America which has been skillfully redirected elsewhere, has left us with a seemingly nameless, faceless enemy. MIT professor Noam Chomsky has lectured about this phenomenon extensively, tackling the push toward the fragmentation of America by corporate propaganda. We're scared, isolated, and alone, constantly pursuing wants that have been created by the Fortune 500, who have been making consistently higher profits at the same time wages for working people have been dropping. We've been made to think that unions are a counterproductive force, and so we're unable to organize powerfully against the real threat of the "private tyrannies" that basically call the shots in this culture. So

our misery is quizzical, and our anger unfocused. Chomsky notes also that the level of cults and religious fundamental-

ism has skyrocketed in the last half-century, feeding on people's anger and pitting it against the devil, the end of the world, or the black helicopters of the United Nations... anything that isn't real.

This doesn't even enter into the notion that civilian Americans haven't been made to feel the pain of real violence on a grand scale in quite a while. Thanks to our geographical invincibility, there hasn't been a war anywhere near American soil since the Spanish-American War ended in 1898. We haven't known the terror of cruise missiles falling from the sky or hordes of soldiers rampaging through our hometowns burning everything in sight and killing indiscriminately. As a result, we are ill-prepared to deal with the loss or displacement of thousands, or even millions, of our own people. We whine and tie yellow ribbons when three of our soldiers are captured, but don't tie ribbons of any color for the hundreds of Yugoslavian soldiers, many with mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers, and dreams, who were killed simply for following orders.

I fear the only way we will ever truly become civil is to know the pain by way of a great calamity, be it a meteor falling from the sky, a

Most of us realize the difference between the world of violent fantasy and reality, but the unrealistic nature of fantasy violence can make it seem as though humans are disposable annoyances, not complex, dynamic, passionate beings.

dramatic shift in the climate of the planet, or a war of unprecedented proportions. Only through a tremendous change in the way we look at liv-

ing can we begin to start helping each other and providing mass service to the world above self. There is another, more frightening prospect that the damage is irreparable, and any such monumental event would just send our splintered sections of culture scurrying to secure our own piece of the pie. But I've seen communities unite impressively over hurricanes and floods, and the spirit of aid was far greater than that of looting.

I'd be willing to wager that the quantity of weapons on the earth no doubt far outnumbers the amount of articles written by saps like me about peace. But I'm going to keep writing them, because even as youth and optimism begin to wane in favor of age and cynicism, I refuse to give up hope that the human race will rise out of its infancy. It may take a few more wars and centuries, but one day, when we've all felt the pain, when all of our pinky fingers have shed blood in the name of insanity, we will have achieved the understanding we need to know what is truly important in the human experience.

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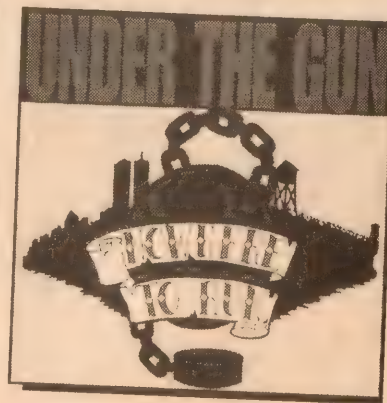
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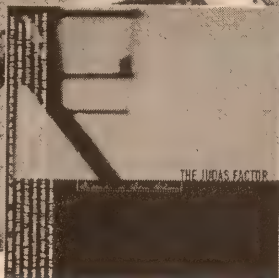
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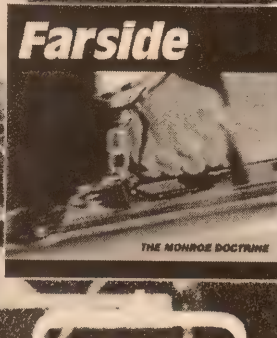
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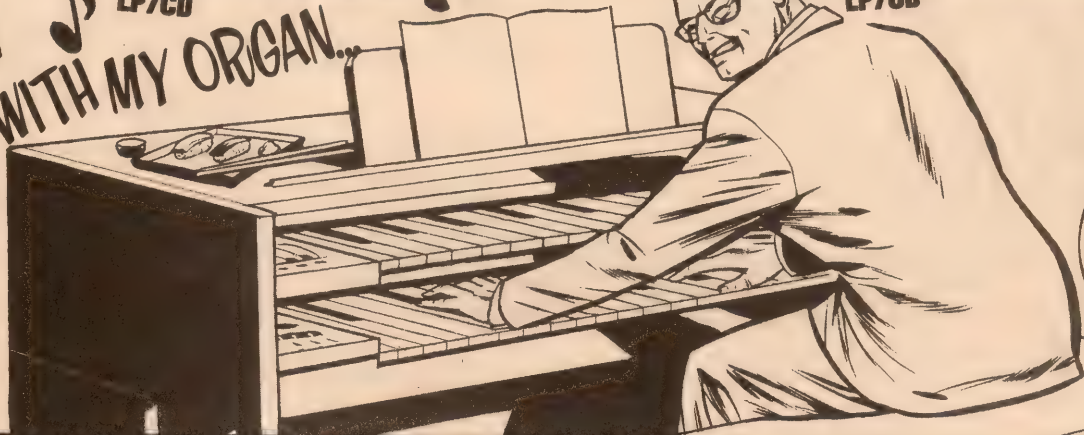
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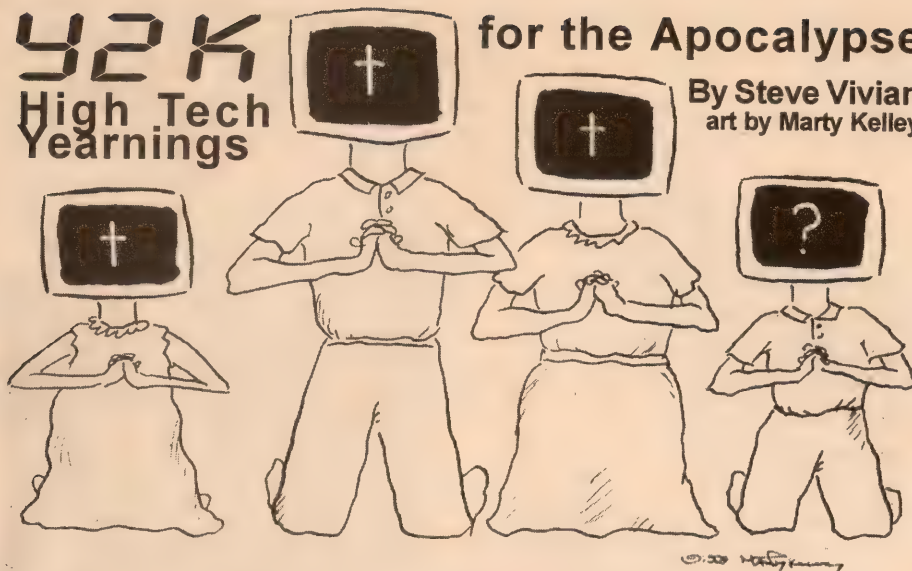
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Y2K High Tech Yearnings

for the Apocalypse

By Steve Vivian
art by Marty Kelley



ARE YOU THIRSTING FOR THE APOCALYPSE? Do you crave a roaring Hellfire that will liquefy your skin and bones to a white-hot puddle? If so, the Y2K bug is the answer to your fevered prayers. It's even the answer to *God's* deepest longings.

The God of the Old Testament—chronically pissed off and shaking His immense fist—has watched from afar as Bill Gates takes over much of the world. And God has taken careful notes: just as Gates used computer technology to reshape the world in his image, God will use computer technology—or rather, a computer bug—to demolish the world in *His* image. God sits brooding upon a roiling storm cloud, the system clock of his Pentium III laptop precisely marking off the nanoseconds to the Apocalypse that St. John warned about.

To bring closure to humanity's final months, perhaps MGM can persuade Charlton Heston to star in one last Bible epic. Opening scene: Heston, lantern jaw clenched, counts down: "3...2...1..." even as he fires a final steel-piercing round at UN black helicopters. And as midnight of 2000 falls upon the American Century, blackness reigns for one second—followed by a stunning mushroom cloud that assumes the mystical triangular shape of the Holy Trinity. Closeup: Heston morphs into God Himself and swats the black helicopters from the boiling sky, then turns his wrath against the ACLU, Bill and Hillary, and tree-hugging Greens. Slow fade to new scene: in the hot stinking depths of Hell, sweaty demons cackle and impale writhing sinners on gleaming pitchforks.

The Heston finale is especially compelling. It unites the lunatic themes of Christian Armageddon, hill-dwelling militia "patriots", and labyrinthine conspiracy theories. All three elements are a big part of Y2K neurosis.

To be sure, Y2K does pose real problems, especially for small businesses or local governmental agencies who rely upon older computers and/or older software. There's little doubt that problems will pop up over the next several months, well into the year 2000. Yes, it would be wise to keep statements of your bank transactions, to have some extra cash on hand, and to buy an extra

week's worth of food and water—just to be on the safe side. Also, it couldn't hurt to talk with a neighbor or two and plan to stop by a widowed senior or perhaps a home-bound neighbor to make sure they're okay as Y2K rolls 'round. But these simple steps are just that: simple. They're not the end of the world—though many folks fervently hope otherwise.

For instance, many fundamentalists see Y2K as an opportunity to win converts. A website (www.y2pray.com) ominously asks, "Is your soul running out of time?" It also asks: "Are you Y2PRAY Compliant?" The website offers prayers to help exorcise the Y2K demons even as it suggests that the end is finally (Hallelujah!) near. Even better, it offers a

Y2Pray toolkit! At \$59.95 the Y2Pray tool kit is the deal of the millennium. It includes a sermon series by Rev. Sam Farina, along with a hat, a t-shirt, a golf shirt (the putting greens in Heaven are almost certainly world-class), a window decal, a mouse pad...and a promotional video! One wonders about the need for promotional videos with the End so near, but then again, Heaven's waiting room probably boasts 4-head stereo VCR's.

Another Y2K site (www.garynorth.com), offers a "User-Friendly Doomsday Computer: Calculating the Likelihood of a Collapse." Mr. North brandishes a series of facts, figures, hunches, and bug-eyed outbursts of paranoia that includes terrorism, the IRS, Nukes, GPS ("Global Positioning System"), Asia, and Unrest. Mr. North's conclusion: "Our numbers predict there's an 87% chance of a collapse of modern civilization."

We offer another conclusion: there's an 87% chance that Mr. North is a blithering idiot. Furthermore, there's a 100% chance that he's got galloping hordes of sweaty followers. In fact, Mr. North is a leader in the far Right Christian movement called the Reconstructionists. Reconstructionists argue that the Bible must be the law of the land...more specifically, *their interpretation* of the Bible. After the "collapse of modern civilization", the Reconstructionists will rebuild the world from the scorched ground up. As Mr. North states, "I want to see y2k bring down the system, all over the world. I have hoped for this all my adult life."

Beyond the lunatic fringe lies the uneasy mainstream. Too many Americans are prone to intellectual incapacitation and primitive panic. This isn't shocking. According to various polls, up to 80 percent of the American population has a strong belief in God; one poll revealed that a little more than half of Americans believed that angels are an important force in their life. This kind of irrationality goes hand in hand with other American irrationalities, such as never-never land conspiracy theories: the federal government bombed the Oklahoma City Federal building; O.J. Simpson was framed by a Byzantine network of L.A.'s finest; Vince Foster was murdered by heinous elements of the Clinton Administration. Small

wonder that many Y2K theorists suspect that the bug is actually a conspiracy to (take your pick) melt down the banking system; allow China to invade Taiwan; let mysterious federal agencies (those black helicopters!) seize our firearms.

The addiction to conspiracy theories can thrive only in a culture that's increasingly unable to think straight. And when rationality disappears, panic takes its place. As *U.S. News and World Report* observes: "Despite other retailers' efforts to discourage stockpiling, Y2K fears already are sending mainstream consumers on a survivalist's shopping spree...preparing for the power outages, food shortages, even civil unrest..." (4-12-99 online edition). What's most revealing in these vignettes is the appalling lack of solidarity that ordinary Americans feel for one another: ready to flee to abandoned Idaho potato fields, or eager to horde food from their own neighbor. Americans are remarkably cut off from one another, much to the delight of hucksters and evangelists with products to sell and souls to terrify. American atomization is aggravated by our pathetic Left, which embraces divisive identity politics, and thumbs its upturned snob's nose at the notion of a common ground.

Ultimately, the Y2K flakes and hustlers are a grim blessing in disguise. They show just how divided and isolated ordinary Americans are. Rather than calmly work together to face whatever problems Y2K might pose, many Americans will lock themselves in their food-and-water packed basements. With Bible and/or rifle in hand, many will listen for armed looters roaming the shadowed streets—or for black helicopters landing in their front lawns.

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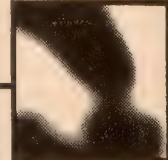
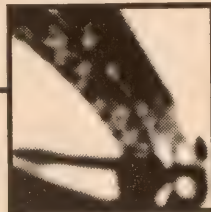
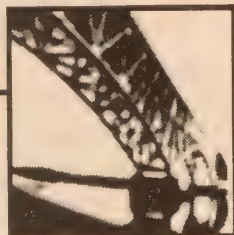


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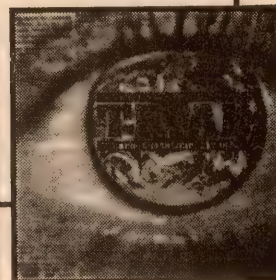
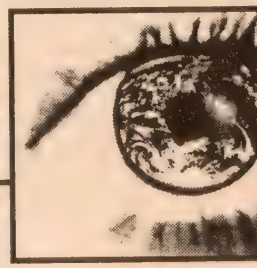
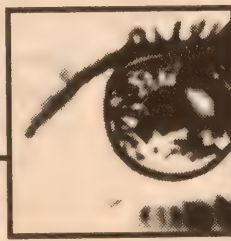
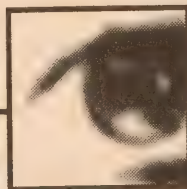
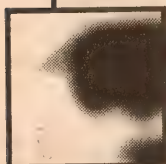
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Facing 30: Growing up... or just growing older?



by Kathy Cannon • art by Eachean Edmundson

The days fly by so quickly, don't they? The end of the year gets closer and closer...and I'm becoming more anxious with each passing day.

"Why?" you ask. "Anticipating the new millenium? Worried about the Y2K bug?"

Nope. I'm turning thirty at the end of December.

Turning thirty is a significant birthday for me; I've finally admitted that I'm getting older. Gray hairs are appearing, my metabolism is slowing, and I can see small lines beginning to appear. Ok—I'm aging and I don't like it one bit. I worry about losing my youth, losing my looks, losing my health, and dealing with all those things that, supposedly, don't get better after thirty.

Even more frightening to me than growing old is facing the fact that I need to grow up. When I was younger, I looked at thirty-year-olds as adults, as real grown-ups—you know—people with good jobs, reliable cars, mortgages, spouses, children, health insurance, and IRAs.

So I've been freaking out, thinking "oh my God—I don't have those things, and I'm supposed to! I'm running out of time!"

A birthday can be a useful way to evaluate your life; I've decided to make some changes before I'm thirty.

I've decided to continue my education and go to graduate school; by the time I'm thirty-five, I want to have my MBA. Pursuing graduate degrees is a growing trend with women these days. According to the Institute of Women's Figures website, the number of professional degrees completed by women has risen from 5% in 1970

to over 40% by 1994. And, since the mid-1980s, women have outnumbered men in graduate school.

Women's participation in workforce has been an incentive for women to further their education. Currently, more than 70% of women between the ages twenty and fifty-four work outside the home, and many are not satisfied with just low-level positions. According to the Korn/Ferry executive search firm, over the last ten years, the number of female executive vice presidents has doubled, and the number of female senior vice-presidents has increased by 75 %.

Eventually, I'm hoping that not only will I be highly educated, but also compensated well. In Brian Carnell's article "The Wage Gap Explained," he cites that a woman with a bachelor's degree averages approximately \$23,000 annually, while a woman with a graduate degree averages approximately \$29,000. While future earnings look more promising, it doesn't quite help my financial situation right now.

Aren't thirty-somethings supposed to be financially secure?

At 29 and counting, I still love to shop and would skip a meal so that I can buy that cute little new outfit I saw at the mall. Although I'm making decent money, I still only manage to have the same amount of disposable income as I had when I was a teen. So I've decided to cut up my credit cards; hopefully that will help.

Credit cards can quickly strap your finances and plunge you into serious debt. Minimum payments barely cover the interest on old purchases, and new debts add to the balance. Credit card companies love people like me who make minimum payments for life, while begging for increased limits on a regular basis.

Now is a great time to be refinancing credit cards and other debt, too. I recently transferred the balances of my high interest cards to one with lower interest rate, and with a second job, I'll pay off my credit card in less than 6 months.

Don't have time for a second job, you say? There are many credit card management services available nationwide that can renegotiate your interest rate for you and reduce your payments, so that you can eliminate your debt quickly. Some companies can also help re-age your accounts so that your credit report becomes more favorable.

Last, but not least, I'm really committed to taking care of myself, both mentally and physically. I'm making time for myself, doing things I want to do, and becoming more confident and secure. I've put the past behind me and recognized that my childhood, which may not have been perfect, is over. It may be a combination of getting older and having a good therapist, but I feel great.

Staying physically fit has been a little bit of a struggle, though. Since I turned twenty-five, I can't eat chips and candy bars without paying for it. For the last few years, it's been healthy food and plenty of exercise. The importance of a healthy lifestyle really didn't hit me, until I found out a few weeks ago that my cholesterol is higher than it should be. (Now that's something I *can* legitimately blame my parents for.) Nearly everyone on my mother's side of the family had high cholesterol; the nurse advised that the best thing I can do is to try to manage it.

After all, preventive care/managed care *is* the current approach to medical care these days. What's interesting is that *anti-aging* medicine is forecasted to be the most popular preventive care approach in the next century.

But can anything *really* be done to *prevent* aging? Can aging be reversed?

The California Anti-Aging Institute (CAI) thinks so. Their approach is that aging is a "disease;" chronological aging continues but physical and mental changes can be reversed. The American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine (A4M) states that about 90% of diseases are due directly to the aging process; instead of treating these diseases, they treat the aging process itself.

CAI uses an anti-oxidant program to reverse aging. Our brains, which affect the aging process, use more oxygen than any other organ in the body. New prescription products enhance oxygen to the brain and reduce the amount of substances that accelerate aging by damaging brain cells. Both CAI and A4M endorse these new drugs and breakthrough therapies.

In addition to anti-oxidants, CAI and A4M also support the use of natural hormone therapy replacement. Such natural hormones as estrogen, melatonin, and testosterone delay and reverse aging *from the inside out*. CAI claims that age spots and wrinkles disappear, sexual vitality returns, and that patients experience a 1% gain in muscle mass and a 2% loss of fat each month. The CAI predicts that with hormone replacement, proper nutrition, and regular exercise, people can expect to live 125 years in excellent health.

Currently, the National Institute on Aging, which has a \$523 million dollar budget, spends less than 1 million dollars on clinical anti-

aging research. Unless aging is effectively addressed, longer life expectancies and an aging baby boomer generation will have an enormous economic impact on Social Security and our health care system.

Aging boomers, women's career choices, and longer life expectancies have contributed to a shift in thinking in our culture. It used to be that when a woman turned thirty, it was all downhill from there, and forty was definitely over the hill. A middle-aged woman was somehow less attractive, less sexy, and less desirable than younger women. But now, women's prime years are close to men's, with forty being a culmination of experience, education, and achievement. A woman's success, confidence, and maturity at middle age make her as desirable, or even more so, as those half her age.

In the 1940s, a woman in her forties could only expect to live another twenty-five years; these days, a woman in her forties still has half her life ahead of her, according to Liza Goodwin and Sarah Van Buskirk in an article titled "The Body by Numbers." Some researchers, such as University of Idaho's professor Steven Austad, predict that eventually women's ovaries will "catch up" to their extended lives, making it possible for them to bear children into their sixties. In the meantime, there's good news for women that want to delay childbearing until later in life. New medical techniques, such as freezing harvested eggs in liquid nitrogen, may become available to women that want to postpone having children until they're ready.

Recently, I received an email with the subject line "Old Age." Each year, the Beloit College in Wisconsin analyzes incoming freshmen's

(OLDER, continued on page 46)

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Death With Dignity... or a .22?

By Susan Sterling • art by Marty Kelley

WITH ONE BANG OF THE JUDGE'S GAVEL, I felt my life change. Witnessing the man who represents humanitarianism, Jack Kevorkian, sentenced as the United States' newest political prisoner, fears of my future surfaced, bubbling forth like molten lava.

Let's face it, no one wants to think about dying. But, from the moment we kick and squirm our way into this world we are on that path. Some of us take a long time to get there, others are clipped from the earth in an instant, too tragically, too early, yet cleanly.

Those who manage to live long and prosper often find themselves the victim of the latest side effect of what someone discovered too late to warn us about. Or there's Alzheimers, and ALS, and MS, and MD, and the ever present cancer. Sometimes we are just tired, when you have to have your britches changed for you, and you can't walk around and care for yourself, you know you've lived long enough, perhaps too long.

I like life because I wake up each day and do for myself. I do for others too, and willingly so, but the most important thing is that I have to ask no one for help. Maybe I'm overly proud and self sufficient, but it's my choice to be so.

When this no longer is, then neither shall I be.

When the time comes, and it likely will, that I can no longer fend or care for myself, I want to die. It should be my choice. It IS my choice.

Oh, my family may gather around me and try to pretend the stench of my diapers doesn't offend them, or that they don't really mind having to feed me as I drool out the corners of my mouth. They can ply me with pills and plump my pillows and push back the graying strands of hair from my wrinkled face and tell me they love me. Maybe I'll understand them, maybe I won't. I'll be brave and try to pretend the pain isn't excruciating, that my dignity is still intact. I'll try awfully hard not to be a lot of trouble for them.

Damnit, if they love me, why won't they let me go? And why won't the government allow people like Dr. Kevorkian to help me? It isn't like it can't and won't happen anyhow. Factoid - The older generation has the highest incidence of suicide of any age group.

Nay, could it be the millions of dollars the physicians, hospitals and pharmaceutical companies would lose should I choose not to suffer needlessly for several years, dragging out my need for medical assistance in the form of pills and people?

Oh, they can fall back on the 'Hippocratic Oath' which is truly borne of religion rather than medicine, or the doctor's wail that they are trained to save lives not end them. But what's it really all about?



Wasn't this country borne of the search for the freedom to live outside of a dictatorship? Why then the trampling of this right, the trapping of our will?

Think of the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, that we are not truly free to live until we are free to die. Unfortunately for him these uttered words prefaced his assassination, hardly his choice, but he left a legacy; the quest for liberty. Freedom is the key. If the government can step in and uphold the right to life, why do they choose not to uphold the right to die??

If the government can, with a single wave of their hand, send our men and women off to war to die, or to kill others, how do they then justify anti-euthanasia? Think too, that they only accept healthy able bodied people in our armed forces, so they will have the strength to fight to their death, while those who are infirm and weak must fight FOR their death.

The government has their hand in how we are born (think: abortion laws), in how we are raised (think: the fights of parents who choose not to immunize; think: the fights of parents to home school), how we live, what we earn, how we spend. The government, by its laws has often allowed a young child to die by the hands of their caretakers, despite repeated abuse calls to social agencies by concerned family members. They LET our children die. The 'where's, 'how's and 'why's of our entire existence fall under some rule. When does it end? Apparently not when we choose.

And, hell, we are not only allowed to soothe the family pet with a swift and painless demise, we are jailed for allowing them to exist in the misery we would tolerate on their human counterparts. Jailed for permitting Bowser to loll about in anguish and jailed FOR releasing Granny from her tortuous existence. I'm desperately searching for the reasoning behind this inequality.

I'm a champion of living your own life as long as your actions do not harm another. Live and let live, mind your own business. Whose business is it if I choose to end my pain? Who will I harm? Now, before you get your panties in a bunch about my family, can I not turn the tables and say that they are guilty of what you are about to accuse me of doing? If I choose to end my life, you can declare I'm being cruel to my family, but if they expect me to live when I no longer have what can be perceived as a life, then they themselves are being cruel. Indeed!

If the government can, with a single wave of their hand, send our men and women off to war to die, or to kill others, how do they then justify anti-euthanasia?

We are allowed the 'Living Will' giving us control over being 'kept' alive, this however after much legal maneuvering and grandstanding. Life and death do not need to be this complicated. Yet, where is the line between withholding treatment and 'allowing' death to occur by shutting off life assisting machines and Dr. Kevorkian's civilized euthanasia? Other than the time factor, and the fact that an assisted death is more merciful to the dying, damn the difference!

The US government and the AMA, however, refuse to condone this intelligent and humane practice that is both ethical and reasonable, regardless of the strong arguments, in spite of the desires of those who want this available to them. How do they condone needless suffering?

I can choose to die, surround myself with my friends and family, say my good-byes and peacefully drift off to sleep with the medical assistance of my physician. Or I can walk into the woods and put a gun to my lips.

Given the choice, which would you imagine my family would really prefer? Which would YOU prefer?

If I need to, I'll go with or without Dr. Kevorkian. I choose to make it my choice. Wake up people, when they jailed Dr. K, they jailed us all.

Make an IMPACT

The Hemlock Society - Supporting the Right to Die:
<http://www.hemlock.org/>

VESS Fast Access - Abundance of euthanasia info:
<http://www.euthanasia.org/>

International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force:
<http://www.iaetf.org/>

Information and research opposing euthanasia:
<http://www.euthanasia.com>

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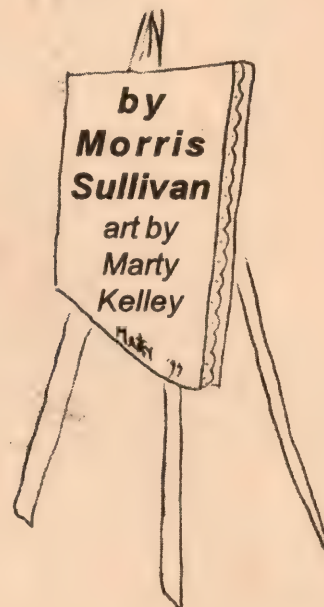
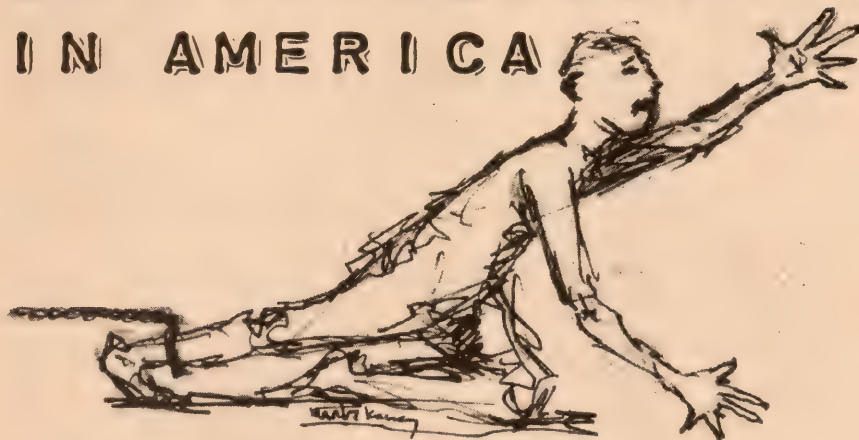


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Imprisoning the Mind

ART CENSORSHIP IN AMERICA



LATE IN THE 18TH CENTURY, a self-proclaimed libertine and philosophical offspring of Voltaire began publishing books that so frightened the representatives of the status quo that he eventually became the most-censored, most-imprisoned writer in history. Not only was he imprisoned, but the Marquis de Sade was eventually declared insane, institutionalized, and forbidden to even possess pen and paper—as if his very thoughts were so threatening that society could not afford their expression, even if he only expressed them to himself.

Now, late in the 20th Century, a Florida cartoonist has, to a degree, followed in the footsteps of de Sade. Mike Diana committed the crime of publishing a comic 'zine, *Boiled Angel*. Like Sade's more famous works, Diana's little comics are filled with disturbing and even nauseating images.

Unlike Sade, Diana creates his works in a democracy in which freedom of expression is guaranteed by the Constitution. That freedom is guaranteed, that is, unless someone in authority deems its expression to be "obscene." There's the rub, because, like de Sade, Diana graphically depicts images of sexual perversity. Unfortunately for Diana, he was living in Florida when he published *Boiled Angel*.

"The obscenity law in Florida," Diana explains, "said that if a work has no artistic value, serious literary value, political value, or scientific value, then it can be judged obscene. What was amazing to me was that they could say it was not art and had no political value; I think the jury just didn't understand the law. They didn't understand that since it was art, it should be protected by the First Amendment."

Florida is a strange state. Since the advent of Disney World in the early 1970s, Florida's leaders have been begging for urbanization, and they have gotten what they asked for. With every economic expansion, however, there has come a backlash. For example, Florida wants its entertainment industry to put it "on the map."

Over the last few years, Miami has developed a world-class ethnic music scene, and Orlando's DJs have been featured in *Rolling Stone*. In the meantime, the state managed to turn an obscure hip-hop duo, 2 Live Crew, into (very wealthy) martyrs to censorship; Orlando has struggled in vain to shut down the scene in which the DJs thrive.

Mike Diana is another example of Florida's Bible-Belt mentality coming into conflict with its Hollywood East aspirations. That clash is remarkably illustrated in the summation by prosecutor Stuart Baggish, when he said that Pinellas County, Florida (the Tampa/St. Petersburg area) need not accept "what is acceptable in the bath houses of San Francisco and the crack alleys of New York."

In order to convict Diana and stop his presses, however, his work had to be considered obscene. According to law, therefore, the artist must be deliberately attempting to arouse the "prurient interests" of its audience. In other words, it has to make its audience horny. Diana's drawings are not the sort of thing that would turn most people on.

However, according to Diana, "The prosecutor, Stuart Baggish, kept bringing up to the jury that my artwork was specifically made for deviant personalities—as if *Boiled Angel* would somehow sat-

isfy their needs when they weren't raping or killing someone. They had a witness, a psychologist that had testified at (serial killer) Ted Bundy's trial, going through each page of the magazine saying that it would cause people to commit crimes. Of course, I had a psychologist on my side saying that it would not cause people to commit crimes.

"It seems like in the old days when I was doing Boiled Angel, one of the themes I kept hearing about was young babies being molested. I decided to go further and show penetration. It was definitely for shock value, but most of my subscribers enjoyed the comics and saw the humor—and I think they realized it was not intended to be masturbation material for child molesters."

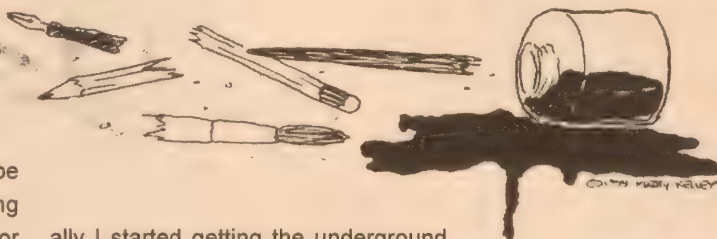
Even if a work of art does arouse the viewer, it still cannot be deemed obscene if it has political or other socially redeeming qualities. That is where the real debate lies—in Diana's case or any other. In order to judge the artistic value of a work, the judge and/or jury must be able to understand the very nature of art itself.

In other words, they have to be critics, and Diana's subject matter would probably not please most critics, either. His work appeals to a part of us that most keep well-concealed—the part that slows down when we pass a bad auto-accident on the highway, for instance. You're repulsed and disturbed, but you can't make yourself turn away. You read a Diana comic on the same impulse that

fills the shelves of the "true crime" section of Barnes & Noble.

His humor is more than a little sick, too; if you laugh at a Diana comic, it's with the kind of wicked chuckle that a teenager with a new driver's license feels when his buddy offers him ten points to run over the lady with the baby carriage.

"I used to like the old horror comics. I had a lot of the 1950s EC Comic reprints. I used to collect those when I was 14, and eventu-



ally I started getting the underground comics. I liked the ones by S. Clay Wilson and a few other underground cartoonists. I really liked Basil Wolverton, too—his twisted images.

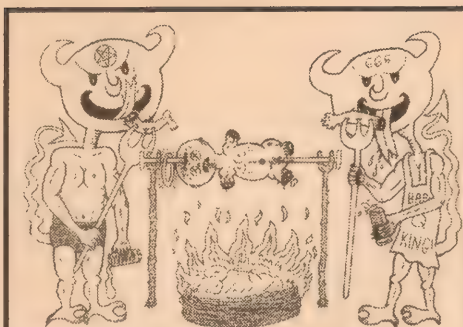
"I found a lot of my influence came from true life cases—real horror stories of strange crimes, reports of priests molesting children, child abuse stories, and so on. Some of these things would stick in my mind, and I felt like I had to get them on paper somehow. I felt I was making a statement about what's going on in our society.

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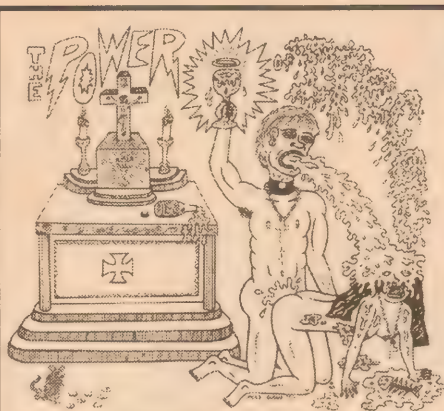
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Staring Back
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Above: The Devil's B-BBQ
All art pictured by Mike Diana



Above: Alien Girl Panic ('92)
Middle: The Power of Ipecac

"I also wanted to make a certain dark humor. I wanted to make people laugh about these real scary situations and get them to open their eyes to what's going on around them. People seemed to me so desensitized to real life violent problems, that they just didn't want to hear about them any more.

"I felt a lot of my fans really liked *Boiled Angel*, but a lot of people got the wrong idea and would call me a sicko. Like there was someone who had been molested themselves, so they wouldn't like it, and I understand that. I would only print the amount of copies that were actually subscribed—about 300 of each issue—so it went to a very select crowd. I would send a sort of mini comic first, which

was tamer. If I didn't hear back from someone, then I wouldn't bother them any more."

Florida's authorities didn't think Diana's comics were very funny—and they got, as he called it, the wrong idea. "I found out that it was someone in California (who brought me to the attention of the authorities) in 1991. He had *Boiled Angel* #6. On the cover, I'd drawn a naked man with an erection cutting open a girl and pulling out the fetus. This was right after the Gainesville murders, when five university coeds were killed. Something about that issue made the person in California think I might be the murderer, so he forwarded a copy to the police in Florida.

"It was around December in 1990. Me and my mother were out Christmas shopping, and when we got home, two undercover agents—one male and one female—were parked in front of our house. They opened this briefcase and took out a copy of *Boiled Angel*, which they showed to my mother. I had told her I'd stopped publishing it, because she didn't like it. Then they told me and mom I was a suspect in a murder and that I was ordered to take a DNA test to clear my name.

"That got my mom all upset. They said I should immediately stop publishing, or they'd take it to judge and have me charged with obscenity. I said, 'Wait a minute. What about freedom of the press?' They told me that talk like that is what can get you into trouble. I thought they couldn't stop me, anyway, because of freedom of the press, so I went ahead and did (*Boiled Angel*) # 8, and I decided that would be the last issue. I wanted to do comics for other publications instead. Two years later, I was charged. I got a certified letter with a summons in it.

"One of those police officers took a personal interest in keeping tabs on me. In court, he said that one day he was in the post office, and just by coincidence, he was behind me in line. He wrote down my name and address, and then he started writing to me asking for copies of *Boiled Angel*. I'm not sure how true that is. In court, he didn't mention that he was one of the officers who had approached me about Number 6."

After Diana's conviction, Baggish recommended that the judge

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sentence Diana to two years in prison. Instead, the judge sentenced him to three years probation and \$3000 in fines. "Lately, I've been going through the conditions of my probation," Diana says. "I've been living in New York for about three years—the state of Florida gave me permission to move to New York, and to do my probation through the mail. I still owe about \$1300 towards the fine."

Like so many others convicted of victimless crimes, he was ordered to do community service. "I'm doing my community service hours for a group called Gods Love We Deliver. They deliver meals to people with HIV who, for whatever reason, can't cook for themselves. I work in the kitchen, chopping vegetables, mainly."

The court considered Diana's work so threatening that it even forbade him to be in contact with any minor, a condition which he says is "still going on." "I think they felt I was dangerous somehow. Because I drew images of child abuse and priests molesting children, they assumed I was a pedophile or something."

Diana became subject to random searches, to make sure that he wasn't off in his room, amusing himself by continuing to draw "obscene" and disturbing cartoons.

"When I was first put on probation, I was still working at my father's convenience store. There was a little girl about 6 years old that lived across the street, and her mother would send her in to buy things with food stamps. The girl would come in, and she'd want some candy, but never had any money, so I'd give her a free plastic toy. After I was sentenced I did the same thing. The probation officer said, 'What's this about you giving toys to children? Are you trying to lure them into the back room or something?'"

"Police could do surprise searches without a warrant. They wanted to keep me from drawing stuff. Part of the reason, I think, was that they wanted to feel like they were really punishing me."

needed any help, but I still go to a psychiatrist once a month, just to keep the authorities happy.

"They also told me that I wasn't allowed to draw anything that

As part of Diana's probation requirements he was required to take a "Journalism Ethics" class. I took it at New York University and passed it. I was also ordered to see a psychiatrist for an evaluation, to see if I needed psychiatric help. The psychiatrist didn't think I



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obscene, even for my own use."

That rule, to civil liberties watchdogs, is the most shocking of all the court's orders. While comics dealers have been busted for obscenity, fined, and shut down, no one has ever been ordered to stop drawing. Not only that, Diana became subject to random searches, to make sure that he wasn't off in his room, amusing himself by continuing to draw "obscene" and disturbing cartoons.

"Police could do surprise searches without a warrant. They wanted to keep me from drawing stuff. Part of the reason, I think, was that they wanted to feel like they were really punishing me. In the court system, they get mad if you don't plea bargain. The judge wanted the people in town to feel like something was being done—to make an example of me—so other people wouldn't do what I'd done."

While Diana feels almost endlessly burdened by the terms of his probation, he's happier now that he's in New York. "I constantly felt nervous—under a lot of stress—so I finally got out of Florida. At first, the state tried to have my probation transferred to New York." The New York probation office didn't approve that, he says. "I guess here they thought Florida was crazy for having me on probation anyway."

As usually happens in such cases, Diana's career probably got a boost by his notoriety. "There have been magazines who have shown an interest in me and my drawings that would probably

never be writing or caring about me otherwise—like *Playboy* and *Wired*. They ran articles and asked me to do illustrations to go with the stories."

Diana's career is still moving forward in New York, too. "I've done color acrylic paintings in the past few years. They're still extreme, but more subtle than the things I've done in the past. I'm drawing for the New York press, but nothing too graphic. I don't think I'm really censoring them, but they are more tame in a way.

"I still hope to get the same response from my fans that I would feel when I was looking at the underground comics. It was a sort of excitement—not a sexual excitement, but from seeing something totally different, something you can't see anywhere else. I enjoyed that extreme stuff, knowing that I lived in a free country and felt happy that I could enjoy that."

Make an IMPACT

Mike Diana's website:

<http://www.testicle.com/mikediana.htm>

Comic Book Legal Defense Fund:

<http://www.cbldf.org>

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU):

<http://www.aclu.org>

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Quickies

A little bit on a lot of records.

CDs and more

13 O'Clock • self-titled • Rockhouse Recordings • "Pop hooks" is the expression that jumped out at me on the press release about 13 O'Clock. This seems in some way to be a major drawback, primarily because pop music is suck-ass pabulum for brain-damaged teeny boppers. This disc is probably the kind of disc that your local rock station would be glad to get their hooks into and play again and again until you want to shoot your radio. There is nothing wrong with the music, it just does not stand out in any way.

33.3 • self titled • Aesthetics • This CD is comprised of guitar/drum/cello compositions. Some tracks are straightforward, others veer into experimental territory, such as the stand-out "Coalesce." There are no vocals, just instrumentation throughout this release. If you're a fan of music for its own sake, seek this out.

77 • Revolution • Elevator Music • Portuguese punk rock? We've been invaded! The political and social undertones make for powerful lyrics, but it's all lost in the lack of musical talent. Personally, I give them the boot right back to Portugal.

AFI • Black Sails in the Sunset • Nitro • AFI plays a very interesting marriage of speed death metal and Offspring-style punk rock, which – departing from the old death metal mold – is actually very positive in its message. These guys have a stupendous amount of energy, and at one point the fire department had to come to remove my head from the wall. This is what I wish metal was about when I was a middle school Beavis.

All Natural • No Additives, No Preservatives • self-released • If you're reading this review and you're looking for real, original, intelligent hip-hop – STOP! Get this CD. Not only does All Natural deliver solid beats, samples and funky sounds, but the lyrics may be the best ever in the world of hip-hop. AN front man, Capital D is a writer before a rapper – something that hip-hop lacks. AN is tired of fake-ass rappers delivering fake-ass rhymes and they're out to 'set the record straight.' Just to prove that All Natural has something to say, this CD comes with a little book of stories, essays, comics and lyrics written by Capital D. Some hip-hop fans (whack fans) won't get it, but those of you who look for more than just made-up gansta stories and bitch-slappin', get with the real deal and have a snack with All Natural.

Andre Williams & the Sadies • Red Dirt • Bloodshot Records • This is country music for those who like blues-influenced country music. The better songs are "Easy on the Eyes," "I Understand (Do You)" and "My Sister Stole My Woman." If you like trad country & blues, search this CD out.

Angel Rot • Unlistenable Hymns of Indulgent Damage • Man's Ruin • Deathrock - hmmm... - the music is kickin' but the vocals are a bit droning on the ears. Then again it is Deathrock – it's supposed to sound like that.

Angelo Badalamenti • Arlington Rd. Soundtrack • Will Records • Fans of David Lynch's films will be familiar with Angelo Badalamenti's contributions to the soundscapes of those pictures. "Lost Highway" had extremely keen compositions by Badalamenti, and "Arlington Rd" shares in his strengths. Badalamenti incorporates industrial noises into his work, and has fun playing with movie-genre conventions. Though I have yet to see Arlington Rd to accurately judge how successful he was at serving the film, this soundtrack serves itself fine. Hopefully the movie lives up to his score.

Anti-Flag • A New Kind of Army • Go-Kart Records • Want punk politics? Now you've got 'em. Anti-Flag are true punk rockers that aren't angry just cause they wanna be – they're angry and with good reason: our world is fucked up. No CD is going to change the world, but if even a handful of

people actually listen to what Anti-Flag say and not just what they play, we're heading in the right direction. The music is fast-paced punk rock with tight melodies and catchy hooks, a good excuse for not noticing that the lyrics are actually intelligent and poignant. "A New Kind of Army" is a good listen and a good read for all.

Atombombpocketknife • self-titled • Southern Records • After the derailment of the band Thumb-nail, Justin Sinkovich and David Burns were looking for a way to express themselves. The opportunity presented itself when they persuaded Allison Hollihan to join them. Together they formed Aton. jmbpocketknife. Playing what they call "Unrock," ABPK is as unthreatening as a pocket knife, but as powerful as an atom bomb.

'Badmarsh + Shri • Dancing Drums • Tommy Boy Music • "Dancing Drums" is a powerful mixture of modern Western dance culture with the ages-old tradition of Indian music. Badmarsh is in charge of all programming, sampling and DJ chores, while the classically trained Shri fires away at the tablas in rapid succession. He is also responsible for all flute, bass and keyboard parts in this remarkable album. This would be the perfect album if you're interested in an introduction to Indian music. You get a good representation of the style, all wrapped up in a nice danceable package.

Black Mask • Music From the Original Motion Picture • Tommy Boy Music • I haven't seen the flick yet but this soundtrack from "Black Mask" is really good. It's all hip-hop and features artists like Defari, Deadly Snakes, Cardan, Bigfoot, Council, Jigmastas and Everlast. There are 16 tracks here and each one is bad ass.

Boris the Sprinkler • Suck • Go Kart • Wacky pop-punk from those goofy lookin' bastards, Boris the Sprinkler. This is a good disc, once you get over the annoying introductions to each song. There are some kick-ass punk tunes here melodic and bouncy, this is a good disc. Be sure to check out Your Stupid Pants and Baby I Got Gas.

Boy Sets Fire • In Chrysalis CD-EP • Initial Records • Please step away from the stereo. This is for your own safety. Otherwise, BSF will blow you away, leave nothing left except a clear message that they are not messing around. BSF uses big riffs, tremendous tempo changes, vocals that can be screamed or sung (done well either way) coupled with a musical talent that is not found in many other bands. While hardcore bands are a dime a dozen, BSF is one of a kind – combining the ferociousness of hardcore and the intricacies of indie rock. This CD features five tracks, including a cool cover of DK's "Holiday in Cambodia".

Brenda Kahn • Hunger • Through Being Cool • This is record for solitary nights when you want to unwind and contemplate loves (has-been and never-were) without being pissed off. Brenda Khan has a nice voice that's vulnerable without falling to little girl cuteness. The accompaniment is sparse yet suiting this record, as the focus is the vocals and lyrics. Much recommended to fans of sensitive female singer/songwriters and the all you lonely hearts. (Why are you alone? You got lots of company!)

Brother's Keeper • Forever Never Ending • Trustkill Records • Rule number one for this CD: skip the first song. Sorry guys, but the vox on the first song sound like the singer was kicked square in the nuts with steel-toed boots. Once you get past numero uno, it's all good. This is hardcore, by the by. It's a little rough around the edges but I like my hardcore that way. It's a solid disc and they have a lot of promise.

Brothers Keeper • Self-Fulfilling Prophecy • Trustkill Records • This disc looked promising. The band photos made me think "hardcore". And indeed it is. The music, I guess, is good as far as hardcore goes. The singer, however, sounds like a

muppet. He has a squeaky cartoon type voice that totally destroys the music. I actually thought it was a joke at first and I skipped ahead a few songs. It was no joke. These guys have potential, but...

Camber • Anyway, I've Been There • Deep Elm Records • This second album from Camber shows they have matured in the two years it took to record. "Anyway, I've Been There" is both melancholic and uplifting, powerful and delicate. It's a bit crunchier than what you would imagine for an emo band, but the emotions, both frustration and hope, are evident. There's also an indefinable "pop" quality to it. If you blink, you might miss it, but it is there.

Chore • Take My Mask and Breathe • Sonic Unyon • Chore is a four-piece, formed in 1995, that delivers solid rock with an alternative twist. This isn't generic altrock, though. These guys are intense, tight, aggressive rock. The sound drives through you, moving your body against its will. Pounding music surrounds vocals that create energized emotions, all packaged into one CD containing thirteen tracks.

Chrome Locust • self-titled • MIA Records • The guys in CL play straight up rock and roll. The vocals remind me of a number of rock/metal bands while the music is melodic, creative and surprisingly good. If you're a fan of solid, rockin' music with searing guitar solos, this is something for you.

Cigar • Time is Relative • Theologian Records • This is good pop-punk. This is fast pop-punk. These guys are top of their class in fast, speed-driven pop punk – they almost have a Lagwagon feel to them in that they are fast and tight. They never get sloppy just to speed things up. This is a really good punk disc.

Circularity • O2High • self-released • Circularity makes you want to paint your face, spread bear-grease in your hair, and dance around your living room until the ghosts of your ancestors appear sitting on your television. Created by David Lyle, a USA native, on native flutes; Canadian James Brown on percussion; and Australian Phillip Miller on didgeridoo, the world beat-inspired recording has a solid, authentic sensibility over-riding the occasional digital electronic effect, with airy flutes wafting over grooves ranging from tom-tom to north African to dance hall, all underscored by the cool, moody drone of the didgeridoo.

Common Rider • Last Wave Rockers • Panic Button Records • After Operation Ivy broke up in 1990, Jesse Michaels seemed to all but disappear from the face of the earth. Almost ten years later, having studied Buddhism and lived in Florida for a while, he borrowed members from Screaming Weasel and Squirrelgun to record "Last Wave Rockers." It blends in ska, punk and reggae into a nice package. Some of the 15 tracks are not ska influenced at all though, so you will like this CD even if you think ska is a thing of the past.

David Hillyard and the Rocksteady Seven • Playtime • Hellcat Records • This is a treat! An accomplished musician (Slackers, Hepcat, Stubborn All-Stars) stepping out on his own to record an album of ska, rocksteady, and New Orleans jazz-influenced instrumentals, with Hepcat's vocalists adding their own to two tracks. The tracks are well paced and feature solid playing by most of the Slackers/Stubborn All-Stars, actually. Give it a listen!

Decay • Destiny • Suburban Home Records • Wow! I listened to some Japanese hardcore before but it just wasn't that good. These guys are way over the top though. The singer can belt with any stinking American and the band is just as raw and hard as their US counterparts. Great disc, a nice surprise from the Far East.

Despise You • West Side Horizons • Pessimiser Records • The thing that should really make you sit up in your seat here is the fact that this disc has 62 songs on it. The average CD holds around 75

Quickies

A little bit on a lot of records.

minutes of music. You do the math. This is aggressive hardcore. They cover a DRI tune and a Circle Jerks tune. With all these songs, I guess that they'd have to cover somebody. There doesn't seem to be enough time for them to develop the songs in this short amount of time.

Diesel Boy • *The Sofa King Kool* • **Honest Don's** • The sound is that of a typical punk rock band. It isn't bad by any means- just not what I would consider great at all. Uptempo, melodic, you know the deal. One thing to note, ex-Shyster (Orlando-based band) drummer, Geoff Lackey, is now their drummer.

Dogpiss • *Eine Kliene Punkmusik* • **Honest Don's** • This is English punk. It's okay. It is not the best disc I've ever heard but it has some good qualities. The music has a British punk feel to it. It's well produced and sounds good. The songs, however, are just okay. It almost sounds like they are trying too hard.

Dr. Frank • *Show Business is My Life* • **Lookout** • Dr. Frank of "The Mr. T Experience" fame creates this extremely fun collection of pop-punk and not-so-pop-punk tunes, which continues in the tradition of MTX intelligence. MTX has always given us creative, bafflingly smart music that's insanely hilarious, and Dr. Frank has no compunctions whatsoever about keeping that alive. A must-have.

Drill for Absentee • *Circle Music* • **Mindwalk** • This band continues in the grand tradition of King Missile, throwing their philosophical interests into music that sometimes flows with the words, and sometimes doesn't. These guys are all over the place, and you can't put a finger on their motives. It's certainly a splendid romp through the raw mind of our humble narrators.

Dwindle • *Days Away* • **Guilt Ridden Pop** • After leaving their fans waiting for two years, Dwindle has come out with "Days Away," a more "produced" piece of work than their last full-length "Recently Okay." Produced by J. Robbins (Jets to Brazil, Kerosene 454, Compound Red), "Days Away" does not stray much from Dwindle's formula of melodic guitar playing and low-key vocals to create a subdued yet powerful sensation.

Dynamo Hum • *Fallopian* • **Self-released** • This is some truly experimental stuff. Soft, beautiful (but not delicate) female vocals ride waves of far-reaching lyrics that seem to touch on a number of different planes simultaneously, as baffling time signatures keep you second-guessing where the music will take you next. Definitely tearing down the walls of what we know.

Egon • *Disillusioned Leftist* • **self-released** • Egon is a three-piece that combines the emo aspects of Braid with a punk rock intensity. The music is super, but the vocals are only so-so. They often sound whiny. Other times, the vocals work. Overall, this is a really solid release and despite the vocal inconsistencies, it's definitely worth checking out.

Electric Summer • *Love Me Destroyer* • **Soda Jerk** • Japanese punk. I can't understand what the hell these dudes are saying. Even when I read the lyrics, I can't figure out what they are saying. This is fast and furious punk that seems to harken back to those old school days when mohawks were the way. This is a pretty good disc as long as you don't spend too much time worrying about their lyrics. Just think of them as bastard haikus.

Endeavor • *Constructive Semantics* • **Trustkill Records** • Oh Boy! Hardcore for the thinking person! Endeavor's lyrics are both personal and political and cover a depth 99% of hardcore can't reach. They put a lot of words in a song, yet the vocals are an instrument on their own, so you can choose to bounce your head along to the music if you're not up to thinking. This CD has me excited about hardcore all over again! GET IT!

Euphone • *The Calendar of Unlucky Days* • **Jade Tree** • Enter the world of Euphone, a world where dissonance is welcomed, singing rejected. Live instruments blend with pre-recorded effects, creating a mood of controlled disorganization. From keyboards and samples to guitars and drums, "The Calendar..." is the well thought out product of some fine musicians.

Farside • *The Monroe Doctrine* • **Revelation Records** • Smack my ass and call me Sally! This is a great 'ring disc! I've never heard Farside before and now I'm pissed; I've been missing a lot. They mix punk, post-punk, indie rock, power-pop and even grindcore. The vocals are clean, the music is tight; this is a fantastic release. This is one of the best CD's I've reviewed for IMPACT, no s---t. Get this immediately. I mean it. Go! Now!

Fatso Jetson • *Toasted* • **Bong Load Records** • I really didn't know what to make of this right off the bat. It's kind of heavy, kind of punky, kind of metal. It's kind of good. It really took me a couple of times through to appreciate it, but this is a good disc. They have a solid sound that keeps you interested.

Fifteen • *Lucky* • **Sub City** • The title of the latest album from the socio/political punk kings is sadly ironic. Lucky is a man who was part of the punk scene in the East Bay including playing in Fifteen for some time. Lucky shot himself dead, hence the title of the album as a way to show respect. Jeff Ott, lead guitarist/singer/writer, has never changed the musical or lyrical direction of Fifteen since its inception in 1988. Today, the music may be more skilled and tighter, but it's still melodic, catchy punk rock and the lyrics pound you with intelligent, well-thought issue-oriented content (including the war on drugs, police brutality, classism and more).

Fugazi • *Instrument soundtrack* • **Dischord Records** • Normally I would say - hey, it's Fugazi, you know what it sounds like. But, hey, that's not true this time around. Instrument is completely unlike the characteristic DC-derived tunes you're used to hearing. A soundtrack to the Fugazi-bio film "Instrument" (see review), the eighteen tracks on this album put a label on Fugazi that may not have been there before - future jazz superstars. The music is melodic, at times abstract, catchy, funky and ever changing. There are vocals on a handful of tracks, but this album definitely lives purely through the skill of the musicians. Wildly cool - for Fugazi fans and fans of creative, inventive music in general.

Fuzzy Comets • *The Circus King* • **self-released** • Fuzzy Comets is a truly robust quintet, fusing, very well, the beauty of the violin and mandolin into triumphant, well-formed, light-hearted songs. This four-fifths female band concentrates greatly on form, and creates a very full sound that lifts. I enjoyed this one tremendously.


Gluecifer • *Head to Head Boredom* • **Devil Doll Records** • These guys are here to save rock and roll, and they don't care who they piss off in the process. Their lyrics cover everything from God's chosen drug dealer to setting dogs on fire. Gluecifer rocks like an out-of-balance washing machine.

Goatsnake • *Goatsnake I* • **Man's Ruin** • Very rarely does the press info accompanying a CD accurately describe what the CD is like. They usually like to fluff it up and make it sound better than it is. However, the folks in Goatsnake's camp hit the proverbial nail on the head; "This is he record that Black Sabbath would have recorded if they were starting today." Absolutely. This has that psychedelic metal sound that no one has anymore. However, these guys are of the doom/Satanic variety so be warned that the vocals aren't about puppy dogs and balloons.

Good Riddance • *Operation Phoenix* • **Fat Wreck Chords** • Bring on the rock and don't let it stop. Fast, tough, intense and still equally melodic, GR delivers fierce music. The guitar riffs are wild, sliding, screaming while the drums pound away. Lyrically, GR has always put forth a mix of personal and socially aware tunes that beg to be listened to (not just heard). Another solid release from one of the most dependable bands around.

Green Machine • *The Earth Beater* • **Man's Ruin Records** • Screaming and yelling vocals permeate this release from Green Machine. Not unusual for this trio of "simple Japanese fishermen." Bass heavy and groove laden is the music they play, switching tempo with the greatest of ease.

Guttermouth • *Gorgeous* • **Nitro Records** • Don't even bother with this disc if you're looking for seri-



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Quickies

A little bit on a lot of records.

ous music. Guttermouth are skilled as hell at playing uptempo punk rock – but their desire is simply to have fun – and that they do. Catchy, bouncy and always worth dancing to, Guttermouth's latest full-length delivers ultra-melodic punk party tunes, they kind that drive you to stage-dive. "Gorgeous" is definitely the band's most complete, powerful and impressive record to date.

Harvest • *Living With a God Complex* • Trustkill Records • Harvest is another hardcore band on the Trustkill label, like Brother's Keeper. Musically they sound very similar and Harvest is even a better band...musically. As far as the vocalist goes...this guy might be related to Phil Anselmo from Pantera – lots of screaming, not much singing. But, hey, if that's what you dig, this is the one for you.

Indecision • *To Live and Die in New York City* • Exit Records • Indecision present us with new vocalist Artie Phillie. This CD contains new stuff and previously recorded songs. The new vocals suit Indecision's chugging brand of hardcore, but I wasn't really bowled over by the new songs- they were a bit long and repetitive. The re-recorded stuff shines here, mostly because I liked it the first time around as well. Give it a listen if you haven't heard Indecision yet.

Joan of Arc • *Live in Chicago, 1999* • Jade Tree Records • On Joan of Arc's third album, the band veers even further off the beaten path. Tim Kinsella and company have typically avoided conventional song structures, but previous efforts have had enough hooks mixed in to keep things interesting. Live in Chicago, 1999 has its moments, but for the most part it wanders too much. At times, the instrumental meandering seems like unfinished sketches of songs. It will be interesting to see how these pieces translate into a live setting and evolve through repeated performances. The album only hints at the material's potential. *Note:* it's not a live album – that's just the title.

Jonesbox • *This Human Condition...* • self-released • This metal band from Melbourne is a big fan of Metallica. How do I know? Because they sound like Metallica. A lot. Listening to "Scorn," everyone in the room at the time did a doubletake and we all said "Sanitarium" in unison. Do not get me wrong. I really liked this album. It is amazing how good it came out despite their low budget and the equipment failures they had to endure. Jonesbox also plays around with rap and techno, although for a very short amount of time. Pick this up and support local music!

June of 44 • *Anahata* • Quarterstick Records • I was very excited to hear that June of 44 had a new CD out. Having really enjoyed last year's "Four Great Points," I was expecting something different, since that's what June of 44 is known for. I must say that it was disappointing. The singing is, for the most part, off key and out of tune. The guitar work is very repetitious and uninspiring. If you are an avid June of 44 fan, you should listen to it and judge for yourself.

Korea Girl • self-titled • Asian Man Records • This self-titled release is a reissue of Korea Girl's debut LP with bonus demo tracks not included on the original. Korea Girl's indie-pop sound is reminiscent of early Small Factory and Seam. Unfortunately, they have recently broken up according to the Asian Man website. In related news, neither Korea Girl nor Asian Man has commented on the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Yugoslavia.

Leatherface/Hot Water Music • split CD • BYO Records • Two bands split the billing on this one. There are six songs from Leatherface and five from Hot Water Music. Leatherface plays loud, guitar-driven punk and do it fairly well. The vocals are hard to hear but the music still holds up. Hot Water Music, on the other hand, is more in the melodic punk vein. Scratch that, they are in the melodic punk vein. The songs are decent and they pull off

some great melodies.

Lickity Split • *Lickity Split* • Torque Records • Lickity Split has been around for about four years now and they're starting to take off. I can tell because I've seen their stickers on some cars around town. They play great punk music and are all very talented musicians. Their songs are tight but extremely high energy. This is a great punk disc.

Lungleg • *Maid to Minx* • Southern Records • This Glasgow quartet has quite a buzz about them. The fickle British music press has proclaimed them "the most perfect pop band in the world" and John Peel has given them his seal of approval as well. (Now, they should probably prepare for the inevitable backlash.) They've also toured with the likes of Sonic Youth and Bikini Kill. Lungleg's "Maid to Minx" is an excellent pop album that shows just why this band has garnered so much praise.

Lustre King • *Shoot the Messenger* • Southern Records • Lustre King finally delivers their debut "Shoot the Messenger," and it rocks! This is post grunge instrumental and experimental, with small doses of special effects. The tempo is pretty much the same throughout, medium to high tempo. Fans of Blonde Redhead and Chisel Drill Hammer will like this.

Mad Trucker Gone Mad • *Cows in the Pasture EP* • Crustacean Records • These guys got some swell reviews in their press kit, but I just don't get it. They call it 'psychobilly' but it just sounds like fast country to me. Country music, as we all know, sucks. Country music that it played aggressively is not any better. I'm sure that these guys are great musicians and all, but this just does nothing for me.

Make-Up • *I Want Some* • K Records • This is a "must own" record. That's it. Go out and buy the best R&B/Soul/Rock N Roll CD released since Make-Ups "In Mass Mind." Granted, this is all previously released stuff compiled on one CD, yet it's so extremely GREAT to hear all these songs in succession, particularly if you're not obsessive about collecting 7"s. If you suffered through their live recordings, you'll find Make-Up redeemed on this CD. So get it now!

Man Dingo/Oblivion • *Split CD* • Dr. Strange • The three boys from Man Dingo and the three boys from Oblivion (that's SIX boys altogether) combine to offer a CD of true punk rock mirth. The offerings are powerful and fast – encompassing the insanity, power, and sheer quality we've come to expect from the punk world of this musical epoch. A spectacular combination.

Marc Olsen • *Didn't Ever...Hasn't Since* • My Own Planet • Marc Olsen offers haunting (bordering on subliminal) vocals, nearly whispering his words to us as the progression of chords throws us into realms of the majestic. Definitely mind-expanding and relaxing. Olsen and company will rub the temples of your mind and give color to the grayest of skies.

Mayor MCA • *Welcome to McCaland* • Sonic Unyon Records • Ok kids, get ready for a journey into McCaland. It's a strange place where the Mayor is Christian Anderson Smith. He opens your visit with a country tune that is along the lines of Palace. He follows that with a more unusual track that makes use of a comb, moog, harmonica, organ and more. It's like circus music for a slow-moving crowd. And the journey continues on, strangely and tripped out. The one constant is Mayor MCA's desire to do music different. He can take a standard blues style and turn into something new, a ballad and make it spooky, a Beatle-esque tune and make it his own. "Welcome to McCaland" is a wild ride that Christian Anderson Smith hopes all can enjoy.

Michael Krassner • [Eponymous] • Truckstop/Atavistic • This is soft vocal music with gently plucking guitars and an unthreatening drum progression. It soothes and creates a canopy of well-received for-

getfulness around you as the music ousts the current thoughts of the evil world and replaces them with a posture-o-pedic bed of metronomic alacrity.

Mount McKinleys • *Stacked Up (and get it!)* • Get Hip Recordings • This third album from the Pittsburgh quartet boasts rock 'n' roll that is new and fresh yet also offers a journey into the sounds of the 60's. It is definitely a little trippy.

Naughty by Nature • *Nature's Finest* • Tommy Boy • It's amazing to me what short attention spans human beings have when it comes to music. I say this because when I picked up this CD, I recognized the names of two of the seventeen tracks, "O.P.P." and "Hip Hop Hoorary." I had completely forgotten about "Uptown Anthem," "Everything's Going to be Alright," "It's On" and "Feel Me Flow." We're talking 1995 here, people! It's only been 4 lousy years and I had already given them the status of "Two Hit Wonders." Let's not ignore the other eleven tracks that qualify Naughty by Nature as an excellent rap group. Take a listen to Nature's Finest and remember what rap was like back in the "old days."

Nymb • 3-song CD EP • Harmless Records • Nymb's three-song EP is a promising release. Nymb plays indie rock with female vocals and layered, driving guitars, but the standout track is the more plaintive "Aluminum Origami." Hopefully there's a full-length in the works.

Old Time Relijun • *Uterus and Fire* • K Records • I would like to be positive and say that this group is just being creative with their sound, but I think it goes a bit deeper than that. The music (i.e. drums and guitar) have a pretty good beat. Not the singing- what does it sound like? Imagine what a drunken man being beaten and stabbed might sound like and you'll start to get an idea. If you or any of your friends happen to be deranged schizophrenics this album might be for you.

Pezz • *Warmth And Sincerity* • BYO Records • They bill themselves as "emo-punk" but I think it's about 90% punk, 10% emo. Big-time producer Steve Albini manned the controls on this disc so it's sonically very tight. The songs are OK but the vocals get a little lost in there somewhere. Overall, not bad though.

Picturesque • *Shine In Eyes* • Trustkill Records • This four song EP is the only release by Picturesque. The songs appearing here were recorded shortly after joining the Trustkill roster. The Minneapolis quartet specialized in driving guitar rock, with elements of punk and grunge thrown into the mix. While recording the full-length follow-up to Shine in Eyes, vocalist Brad Senne left the band. Picturesque attempted to find a new vocalist, but ultimately the band decided to call it quits. Picturesque, we hardly knew ya.

Pinhead Circus • *Everything Else Is A Far Gone Conclusion* • BYO Records • This is straight-ahead, high-powered punk, but it's not so loud that your head hurts – there are plenty of hooks in there (see track three, "Hallmark"). There are 11 high-energy songs and I predict you'll play every single one the first time you put it in.

Planes Mistaken For Stars • self-titled • Deep Elm Records • PMFS plays emohardcore. At times the music is highly emotional, dramatic, deeply woven and captivating. Then it twists, turns, expands and explodes into a hardcore slugfest. Combining the two has created a wonderful final sound. Beautiful, intricate and intense – a perfect recipe for a great new band.

Poi Dog Pondering • *Natural Thing* • Tommy Boy Music • I don't know what it is about this album, but I really dig it. Maybe I'm getting older, or maybe this is just good music. Walking the line between Adult Contemporary and Jazz, Poi Dog Pondering eases you into roughly 70 minutes of danceable tunes and R&B tinged numbers. There are ele-

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A little bit on a lot of records.

ments of disco and electronica scattered throughout as well. Some tunes, however, are too formulaic and worthy of MIX 105.1 or WLOQ airplay. But you can always skip those tracks in favor of the better ones!

Pulley • @#/* • Epitaph Records • St. Louis Cardinals' pitcher Scott Radinsky is paid to throw strikeouts, but the latest album from Pulley is a homerun - thanks in part to the great vocal skills of that talented pitcher. Similar in ways to Face to Face, Pulley capitalizes on strong, deep melodies that are tighter than a Masterlock. Some bands are finally realizing that to be great you need quality music and lyrics - not just music. Pulley fulfills both requirements and passes with flying colors - I give 'em an 'A' for awesome.

Rachel's • Selenography • Quarterstick Records • After a two and a half year absence, Rachel's decided to finally record some of the songs they had been playing live for a while, but had not laid to tape, as well as some new material. This is beautiful music to be played in the background. Lots of piano, harpsichord, accordion, percussion, and other instruments construct this layered work. Sounds fade in and out, and you loose track of what song you're in. Listen to "Selenography" when you need to relax after a hard day at work.

Rainer Maria • Look Now Look Again • Polyvinyl Records • Rainer Maria is an emo band, without the obvious punk influence. Caithlin Demarris' expressive vocals and the shifting, swelling dynamics are quite powerful. Rainer Maria sounds like a more intense version of Versus. The album opener, "Rise," is a beautiful piece that slowly builds from just vocals and guitar into the full band, perfectly setting the stage for what's to come.

Rye Coalition • The Lipstick Game • Gern Bladsten Records • Down with Wheat! Down with Pumpernickel! And, especially, down with Whitey! It's rye we want! The Rye Coalition plays an angry, chaotic, and edgy style of indie rock. At times it's reminiscent of the Fall. Screw the others-make that sandwich on rye next time.

Scott Brookman • For Those who love POP • Twee Kitten Records • If you've been waiting for a new Burt Bacharach, well, the old one is still alive and kicking out tunes. Nevertheless, Scott Brookman steps up to offer his interpretations of Pop music that bear Bacharach's influence. It's nice stuff, well produced, and makes good use of harmonies and keyboards in an early 60's style (though the instrumentals take the keyboards to a bad place.)

Screeching Weasel • Emo • Panic Button Records • Don't let the title fool you, this is not emo-rock. Screeching Weasel is pure punk, no fillers. They've been around for 13 years now and do what they do very well. It's melodic punk with solid playing and great lyrics. This disc will remind Screeching Weasel fans of the "My Brain Hurts" release.

Secret Hate • Vegetable Dancing + Live and More • Skunk Records • This album was originally released in 1983. Sublime helped spark new interest in this band, by covering "The Ballad of Johnny Butt" which prompted the re-release of the album. It deviated from the traditional 80's punk sound, breaking all boundaries.

Seth Yacovone Blues Band • Yessir • Self-released • I saw these guys open for B.B. King, which should, and does, speak of the music they play. They are amazing. Seth Yacovone is a 17-year-old blues genius. The band is tight and the music is exactly what the blues should be - soulful, fun, sad, powerful. This live recording catches this band what they must do best - perform in front of an audience. The songs are long so you can fully appreciate the singing guitar, the crying harmonica and the tight rhythm. This is the best blues CD I've heard in a long time.

Seventy Eight Days • Revolution Through Anonymity • Trustkill • This is some cool hardcore. These guys play fast and fierce with a big sound that really tears things up. My big complaint is that the disc is only 4 songs long. If those four songs are any indicator as to the potential of this three-piece powerhouse outfit, I expect big things of them.

Shallow • Jumping Away From Something Exploding • Devil In The Woods • This is some different music. Very heavy on the synthesized sounds, but the singer has a beautiful voice. The music is okay. It is nice to see bands trying different things - and it does seem like there is some talent in this band. The songs are far from pop oriented - they range from slow and moody to fast rockers. This is an interesting disc worth listening to if only for her gorgeous voice.

Sky Cries Mary • Until The Grinders Cease • World Domination Music • Fans of Sky Cries Mary probably know about this CD but haven't been able to get their hands on it, as it was only released in Europe. This is a different line-up for SCM. Playing on this disc were Jon Auer and Ken Stringfellow who are better known as Posies collaborators. This disc is heavily industrial-influenced noise. Different but likable.

Sleeve • Cellophane Persona • Peachy Way • This is every song you have ever heard on the radio condensed into one handy disc that you can take to the beach with you. The music is okay. It is designed to be played on rock radio. This is just a pop-rock disc.

Society 1 • Slacker Jesus • Inzane Records • You may have noticed the barrage of bands that are playing the "new sound" that is known as "hard music." Some of these bands are very good, some suck terribly, and some are merely average. Society 1 lies somewhere between the average and the great. "Slacker Jesus" is sprinkled with elements from electronica to remind us that the millennium is approaching. Is this release Y2K compliant? That is, will anybody care about it next year? I think so. The aggression is there, and the vocals are mean. If this electronica thing goes away, you'll still be able to enjoy Society 1.

Solarized • Neanderthal Speedway • Man's Ruin Records • Neanderthal Speedway starts as if in mid song, halfway through a monster riff. I say monster because Solarized sounds a lot like Monster Magnet, and I mean a lot. In fact, MM lead guitarist Ed Mundell and visuals/propaganda expert Tim Cronin contribute on two tracks. The energy never fades, as you fall deeper and deeper into a state of total rock and roll bliss. There are also elements of The Cult and Rob Zombie in this release.

Starmarket • Calendar • Deep Elm Records • Some bands get your attention with a catchy hook, a vocal harmony, a tempo change. Starmarket gets you with all those things, wraps them around you and drowns you in it. Sucked in, enveloped by the tight, uptempo emo-influenced hardcore from these Swedish fellas - and you won't want to break free. Every now and then a record this good comes along, avoids the "it sounds like every other band" tag and delivers music that you can really rock to, listen to for days at a time and want to play for every one of your friends. Starmarket has arrived - beware of its power.

Steadman • Loser Friendly • Self-released • Steadman is a disciplined five-piece of British greatness who fit each other like a glove. Self-proclaimed: "We don't have a political agenda, we have a musical agenda. Steadman believes in quality songwriting." It shows, as their well-conceived songs create a mosaic of musical ingenuity that cannot be grouped into any order of modern music sect - it's just great indie rock.

Suicidal Tendencies • Freedumb • Side One • Old S.T. fans rejoice! This is old school Tenden-

cies - fast, hard, snap your neck off hardcore. And they're back with a vengeance. It's like they've had all this energy stored up for years and they've just dropped an A-bomb. Kick ass! Mosh it up, you sick bastards! (Side note: the drummer for S.T. named Brooks Wackerman who was once in an all-kid band called Bad 4 Good, beside Infectious Grooves, with guitar prodigy Thomas McRocklin.)

Sweep The Leg Johnny • Tomorrow We Will Run Faster • Southern Records • This is oddly compelling stuff. It is difficult to try to describe music with words, but they sound just a touch like Lou Reed in that depressing, but still cool, sort of way. I really did not like this the first time I listened, but I soon learned the error of my ways and, on a second listening, really started to dig this. There are only 5 songs on the disc, but they are enough to keep you happy for quite some time.

Teen Idols • Pucker Up • Honest Don's • This is quite possibly the best new punk CD I've heard this year. This is pure pop-punk in the vein of The Ramones, The Queers, Screeching Weasel... you get the idea. This disc has 14 tracks, not one of which is a stinker. The music is bouncy and fun, but doesn't sound like a bunch of sissies playing it. I love this disc.

Tetsuo/Brass Knuckles for Tough Guys • Stunt • Class B Records • I was driving while I listened to this CD and I almost got into an accident! This split compilation features unreleased remixes from Tetsuo and Brass Knuckles for Tough Guys, both very angry bands. Their music is heavy on the drums and full of fast guitar work, odd tunings, asymmetrical rhythms and uneven song structures. Some of the songs are instrumental, while others are screamed into your ears. These two bands have shared members at different times, which is why it sometimes is difficult to set them apart from each other.

The (International) Noise Conspiracy • The First Conspiracy • G-7 Welcoming Committee • The idea for this band was "the perfect symbiosis of Elvis and Che Guevara," but it came out more like a combination between The Who and Guy DeBord. The five members of this band got together after their previous bands fell apart, brought together by their love for 60's punk, rock, soul and radical politics. Their sound is gritty, but not dirty. Obviously, this album was well recorded. The combination of organ and raspy vocals reminded me of the Delta 72.

The Billy Nayer Show • The Villain That Love Grew • BSG Records • "What could we do, bacteria grew?" asks Cory McAbee in "Sunshine All the Time." "The closer she gets to me, the older she starts to look," and "She has all the things I need, but how long will I need them?" show how San Francisco's premier uneasy listening singer deals with love. He knows it is a losing battle, yet he finds himself powerless to resist it. Wrapped in cynicism are other topics such as Satan, Christ and his own funeral.

The Black Heart Procession • 2 • Touch-n-Go Records • Ooooh, this is some woeful music. If you are vulnerable to putting guns in your mouth when things get sad, this is a disc you should avoid. If you are normal, you will enjoy this break from the crap that is spewed forth over the radio waves every day. The songs are moody and dark. There is a lot of feeling in every note and in every instrument. This is a disc worth listening to.

The Burgundy Romance • Move2CD • Boxcar Records • I gave it an honest, open minded listening, but I just did not like this disc. The songs had long (too long) introductions and they just seemed to wander around - they never got up to go anywhere.

The Coup • Steal This Album • DogDay Records • All hail this Oakland crew that gives reason to listen to west coast hip-hop. Breaking the mold, The

Quickies

A little bit on a lot of records.

Coup deliver solid beats, great cuts and rhythmic skills. Comprised of Boots on the mic and Pam The Funkstress on the turntables, The Coup are one of few lyrically intelligent hip-hop groups, so confident with their rhymes that they are printed in the CD (something rarely found in hip-hop). Some of the tracks are party cuts while others are more serious (dealing with poverty, police, politics and more). Every track, though, has a style its own transcending the whackness of the generic hip-hop world.

The Crabs • Sand and Sea • K Records • For their fourth full-length album, the Crabs added keyboardist/vocalist Sarah Dougher as a full-time member. Dougher is an excellent addition to the existing lineup. Her keyboards fit in perfectly with the Crabs' style of soothing indie-pop.

The Fly Seville • Carousel • Sealed Fate Records • This debut album from The Fly Seville makes me incredibly eager to hear their future works. Jesse Blatz's vocals blend perfectly with the mellow rock of the instruments. A true find indeed.

The Freeze • One False Move • Dr. Strange Records • Aaahhh! A punk rock band that isn't afraid to use 80's glam rock guitar riffs! Even if you're not a fan of Twisted Sister, I'm sure you'll find this to be a great CD to add to your collection.

The Gamits • This Is My Broomstick • To The Left Records • A self-described cross between Propagandi and The Beatles (it must be the hair) The Gamits are a pop-punk outfit from Colorado. This is good music. The disc is well produced - it sounds good - and the songs seem to break a bit from the typical pop-punk mold which, while enjoyable, gets a bit dusty after a time. This is a good band to watch for in your area.

The Insects • Return To The Foreign Legion • Zap Records • This disc sounds like it was made 20 years ago. This is old school punk with a definite classic feel. Great grungy guitar sounds with loud, twangy solos, this is a lot of fun. Plus, there are 17 songs on here so you get plenty of bang for your buck.

The Jamons • beauty bravura • Tomato Head Records • Pop/rock with a little bit of punk influence. Boppy and catchy without being obnoxious. Pretty cool - the horns even add a touch of ska. Check it out.

The Loons • Love's Dead Leaves • Get Hip Records • Featuring former members of the Tell-Tale Hearts and the Hoods, Sweden's Loons sound like a long-lost 60's band. From British Invasion-style pop to psychedelic-tinged tunes, the Loons easily recreate the sounds of the era. While it does not break much new ground, Love's Dead Leaves is an enjoyable listen.

The Muffs • Alert Today Alive Tomorrow • Honest

Don's • This is a bit of a change from previous Muffs efforts. "Alert Today Alive Tomorrow" is a bit less aggressive and in your face, opting for a slower, more melodic style. There's even an instrumental track. Don't worry though, Kim Shattuck's trademark growl will remind you that you are listening to the Muffs.

The Nitwitz • The Dark Side of the Spoon • Rocket Dog Records • As you might imagine, the cover of the latest Nitwitz offering is a take-off of the Pink Floyd classic. (Coincidentally, Ministry's upcoming release has the same title.) The album features 14 tracks of MC5 and Stooges-influenced punk rock. Now, just rent a copy of "The Wizard of Oz," buy a case of cheap beer and/or your favorite mind-altering substance, and start this CD just as the MGM lion roars at the start of the film. It's pretty bad ass.

The Palindromes • A Car, A Man, A Maraca • Twee Kitten • The sound is that of a stereotypical girl lead vocal band. Not to say that's a bad thing. Just don't listen to it for too long unless you intend to have the sugariness of it all stuck in your head for days.

The Pawn Rook Four • Songs for a Romantic Evening • Super 6 Records • Gainesville's The Pawn Rook Four are one of the latest bands from the thriving Central Florida music scene hoping to make the jump to the big leagues. Judging by this effort, it sounds like they are headed for a major label. The album features well-polished guitar-based pop tunes that would fit nicely in adult alternative radio. It wouldn't surprise me if these guys achieved the same level of national recognition as fellow Floridians Matchbox 20 and Sister Hazel.

The Pennies • Come We Go • Ear X-tacy/Damn Entertainment • Debuting out of Louisville, Kentucky one of the best pop/rock albums you'll hear this year. Loud and raunchy with a dose of acidic guitar makes for a CD that you'll want to hear at top volume.

The Queers • Later Days and Better Lays • Look-out • What can I say? The Queers are the band that turned me on to punk in the first place. This disc is like a demo version of the Love Songs For The Retarded disc. Most of the same songs, though in a rougher less produced form. The songs seem to have more energy this way, they feel live. There are also a slew of other songs not found on the Love Songs disc. There is a lovely cover of the Beach Boys' "Little Honda" and a fun tune called "Too Many Twinkies". If you're a Queers fan, and who isn't, get it.

The Razzles • Suck My First Impression • Get Hip Recordings • The debut full-length album of this Buffalo, N.Y. band features upbeat melodic/pop-punk sounds reminiscent of the Queers. Who would think that a band this good would tour with the

Goo-Goo Dolls? Maybe on the next tour, the Goo-Goo Dolls will be opening for them!

The Strap-Ons • This is the Last Straw • Bizerk Records • This Philly band sings of beer, violence, and fast food. Some tracks are hardcore, others more angry punk rock. The music has a sloppy/garage band sound, but other than that it was pretty good.

The Ziggens • Three Wise Men...and Dickie • Skunk Records • Totally tubular surf rock is rolling in, set by set. These are glassy tunes, the kind you

can ride all the way to the shore. Be careful when you try to catch a barrel, you might just get sucked in. Killer, dude!

Toe 2000 • Toe 2000 • Truckstop • Toe 2000's music has grown from the love of finely tuned musical compositions that transport the listener to another plane. More concerned with instrumentation than vocals, they reject the traditional verse and chorus structure and instead opt for a more orchestrated sound. Japanese Blues singer Yoko Noge was brought in to sing on a few tracks, acting more as another instrument, rather than as a spokesperson. Her words, both in Japanese in English, are enjoyed for their rhythmic flow, instead of for their meaning.

Tortoise/The Ex • In the Fishtank • Konkurrent Records • This release is the fifth in Konkurrent's "In the Fishtank" series. The Holland record label invites bands touring their nation to record together. The bands are given two days to record basically whatever they want, be it cover tunes, improvisational pieces, etc. Tortoise and the Ex rose to the challenge and created a highly interesting EP in the mere 48 hours. The Ex added more of an edge, as well as some vocals, to Tortoise's usually subdued instrumentals. This is definitely an interesting idea for musical collaboration.

Tristeza • Spine & Sensory • Makoto Recordings • Tristeza is the Spanish word for Sadness. Yet after listening to this quintet's instrumental "Spine & Sensory," I felt both relaxed and uplifted. Songs drift in and out of your consciousness, with echoes for backgrounds, creating a lush backdrop in which to lose yourself. Jazzy tempos and slow beats are de rigueur, and emo elements creep into the foreground here and there. The only departure from this pattern is "Cinematography," a beautifully composed piano solo that both stands out and blends in with the surrounding tracks.

Ultimate Fakebook • This Will Be Laughing Week • Noisome Records • Full of catchy hooks and head bopping guitar this sophomore album from the Kansas trio sings pop the way it should be. You may even see some of yourself in some of their lyrics.

Various Artists • Crust O Matic • Crustacean Records • A compilation disc that was a pleasant surprise. It's loud and raq, playing a little punk and a lot of rock mixed in with a dash of funk. This disc features the likes of Mad Trucker Gone Mad, Supermodel, Mucky Pup, and Fuzzdolly.

Various Artists • Cue's Hip Hop Shop Vol. 1 • DogDay Records • This compilation features underground artists from all over the US (most cuts are from Cali, but there are also tracks from NY, Miami, Cincinnati and Jersey City). Some tracks are more notable than others however as a whole, this is a great sampling of indie hip-hop. Standouts include the bouncing, tough "Me and My Crew" by Rasco/Kut Masta Kurt, the smooth and subtly aggressive "Maintaining Izmatic Degress" by Izm Da Mad Soul, the fresh beats and scratches of "1-800-Coming Correct" by DJ Badrok and that's not all.

Various Artists • Delphonic Sounds Today • Del-Fi Records • A tribute to one of the first Indie Rock labels and the musicians that kept it alive. It features hits like I Fought the Law, Hippy Hippy Shake, Donna and much more covered by bands that capture the spirit and freedom of the 50's and 60's. Among those included are the The Brian Jonestown Massacre, The Liquor Giants, and The Negro Problem.

Various Artists • Hideous Kinky soundtrack • Will Records • This CD features country/folk/rock from the likes of Jefferson Airplane, Richie Havens, and Canned Heat. It is dynamic and versatile in the musicians and styles. This CD is great to listen to if you just want to chill and take some time out for yourself.

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Quickies

A little bit on a lot of records.

Various Artists • Life in the Fat Lane (Fat Music Vol. IV) • Fat Wreck Chords • This fourth installment in the Fat Music series will satisfy all of your punk rock needs, whether you're looking for the hardcore sounds of Good Riddance, the more melodic ones of Lagwagon and Frenzal Rhomb, or even a taste of ska by the Mad Caddies. This is a good one to pick up. An added bonus— it's hellishly cheap!

Various Artists • Long Beach Blvd. Compilation • Skunk Records • A great collection of songs, new and old, direct from the punk ethic of Long Beach. It includes the first recordings since 1983 from Secret Hate, along with tunes from Juice Bros., Das Klowm, Corn Doggy Dog & the 1/2 lb., and never-before-released-on-CD songs from the Pivot Foots. Get this comp because the Long Beach area is getting ready to crank out a lot more punk.

Various Artists • Short Music for Short People • Fat Wreck Chords • 101 bands singing 30 second songs. Pretty classic. This is actually a great way to be introduced to punk rock in small bite-size chunks. I'm not even going to try to list the bands here (included are: Green Day, Dillinger Four, Teen Idols and more), but rest assured that most of your favorites are here. You don't have to be short to like this CD, but you had better have a short attention span.

Various Artists • Spanglish 101 • Kool Arrow Records • As soon as I saw this CD on the review pile, I grabbed it, before even listening to it. I read the names of the bands on this compilation and knew I would not be disappointed. I wasn't. This CD has tracks in English and Spanish, while some songs are in both languages. Now, let's get to the songs. There are two previously unreleased tracks by the incomparable drug-death-metal band Brufiera. Anyone who grew up in any part of Latin America during the mid 80's should recognize their cover of "Don Quijote y Sancho Panza." This track is worth the price of the album by itself. Also featured is "Montate" from the up-and-coming Puerto Rican band Puya, which is currently on the Ozfest tour. Don't think that this album is a hard music/metal release, though. Mexico's Control Machete and Spain's 7 Notas 7 Colores provide hard edged hip-hop tracks, while La Flor Del Lingo blends both styles into a track called "Clicka 13." Fans of Atari Teenage Riot will enjoy the pounding bass line of "Tribes Is My Pride" by Tezacrifico. 17 tracks in all. Go out and get this CD, so you can see what is happening in music outside the limits imposed on you by record companies.

Various Artists • Spring-Summer 1999 Compilation • Southern Records • This compilation features bands from several record labels distributed by Southern, including Desoto, Constellation, My Pal God, Tree, and Shiver/Dubhead. Standout tracks include Emperor Penguin's electronic pop instrumental "Stay for the Freak" and Sackville's folksy "The Principles of Science." This is a cool compilation, touching on everything from post-punk to reggae.

Various Artists • Swing Sucks • Liberation Records • Do I really need to tell you what this album sounds like? With the onslaught of swing compilations to the market in recent times, it would be ridiculous for me to tell you how this one is different. If you are a fan of swing, the you'll enjoy this one. The songs tend to sound more like the classics than the newer revival stuff. One thing I should point out is the appearance of Central Florida's own Swingerhead.

Wolfpac • Four Hits From Hell EP • The Humpty Dance single • Sugar Daddy Productions • Does anyone remember the Bloodhound Gang? Founding members Daddy Long Legs and M.S.G. used to be in it, but decided they wanted to do their own thing. That thing is Wolfpac. Sounding remarkably close to the Insane Clown Pose, they waded through the rap-metal pool that is overflowing with mediocre wannabes. I didn't care too much for them, but I did like the cover of Digital Underground's "The Humpty Dance."

Seven inches

Citizen Fish • Habit (re-mastered) • Lookout! Records • This was released a little while ago but sounded like crap. So, here it is, re-mastered and better than ever. These crazy Brit rockers have crafted four hopin' tunes for your dancin' pleasure. Each one has an old school punk-pop feel with new school additives to make it tastier.

Deathray • My Lunatic Friends/Now That I Am Blind • Pop Rock It • If you know anything about Deathray then you might know that two of the members used to belong in the band Cake. Fortunately, Deathray sounds nothing like Cake. Poppy but not stupid, rock but not what you are used to. This single is sure to be a hit.

Harvest • One Step Closer Than The Last • Trustkill • All four songs here are musically awesome hardcore with heavy, chunky guitar licks, deep basslines and furious drumming. But on all four of those same songs are awful vocals. Harvest would be incredible if 1) they got a better singer or 2) they just went strictly instrumental.

Lando's 45 • Titanic • Harmless Records • This record was recorded back in mid-'97, but the sound plenty new. Lead vocals are provided by Daryl Wilson from the great Bollweevils. All four tracks on this slab are very Bollweevils-like and that means...very good. If you're a fan of the 'Weevils or enjoy fast-paced, melodic punk rock with great vocals, this is personally made for you!

Secret Hate/DAS Clown • split 7" • Skunk Records • Secret Hate's song reminds me of Dead Kennedys to some extent. It's fast, aggressive, angry and a bit rough around the edges. It'll get your blood flowing. Das Clown presents two tough tracks of punk rock joy. Like SH, the songs are fast-paced but they also have a playful side, if that makes any sense.

Speak 714 • The Scum Also Rises • Revelation Records • Perhaps it's asking too much to expect Speak 714 to top their debut full-length "Knee Deep in Guilt." Everything that was great about that record is scattered through these 4 songs. Unfortunately the sound and progressions are too similar to one another. "Stick and Move," the first track, has the same pattern as "Knee Deep in Guilt," and I don't relate to the lyrics and defiant attitude here as much as in "Knee Deep."

Ten Yard Fight • The Only Way • Equal Vision Records • If you want to hear songs about kicking someone out of the crew, standing strong, and speaking out, all in the name of the Edge, look no further. What is it with Straight Edge that attracts the most untrustworthy kids that betray their friends to such an extent they can fill an album with complaint songs? This is good 80's sXe hardcore that NEVER resorts to using the words "straight edge."

The Wunder Years • Take It Off, Let It Go, Start From Scratch • Tomato Head Records • Lyrics like "Don't slip up, stay strong, your sunlight still shines once the day is done and gone" bring a smile to my face. Once you hear the music, you'll smile even more. It's utempto pop-punk (with an occasional ska influence), but it's not generic and simple; the four songs have a unique style that is damn good and worth checkin' out.

Turnedown • Now and Then • Sessions Records • Turnedown is a five-piece that'll keep your toes-tappin' to their melodic power-punk tunes. All three songs are filled with tempo changes, solid vocals, intricate guitar parts and enough creativity to keep your ears happy.

Versailles/The Mercury Program • split • Boxcar Records • Both bands on this release provide one song. Versailles is a three-piece that plays indie-rock with an aggressive edge that at times reminds me of Modest Mouse. The Mercury Program is also a three-piece blasting out hypercreative music, focusing on inventive instrumentation along the indie-rock lines. However, the vocals seem to take away from the overall sound.

Videos

Fugazi • Instrument • Dischord • I'm not a huge fan of band videos. More often than not, the videos are boring glorifications of the music with visual stimulation (like MTV, but you can fast forward). Not "Instrument". Jem Cohen's ten-year project has amounted to a fascinating look at the history of a very important indie band. The film combines live footage, interviews, fan montages and behind the scenes shots to create a real personable look at Fugazi and its members. I most enjoyed the old clips of band member interviews and shots of the band goofing off. For the most part the footage is extremely high quality and the sound is superb. This is definitely a film that any fan of Fugazi is required to have — and fans of great music will enjoy checking out.

Label Addresses

(write these guys, tell 'em IMPACT sent ya)

Aesthetics, PO Box 577286, Chicago, IL 60657
 All Natural, 8141 S. Michigan Ave., 2nd Fl., Chicago, IL 60619
 Asian Man, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030
 Bizerki, 125 Claridge Dr., Willow Grove, PA 19090
 Bloodshot Records, 912 W. Addison, Chicago, IL 60613
 BNS Prod., PO Box 423875, San Francisco, CA 94142
 Bong Load Records, PO Box 39557, LA, CA 90039-0557
 Box Car Recs, PO Box 1141, Melbourne, FL 32802-1141
 BYO Records, PO Box 67A64, LA, CA 90067
 Circularity, circularity@hotmail.com
 Class B Records, 1846 W. Armitage, Chicago, IL 60622
 Crustacean Recs, PO Box 370156, Milwaukee, WI 53237
 Deep Elm, PO Box 1965, New York, NY 10156
 Del-Fi, 8271 Melrose Ave #103, Los Angeles, Ca. 90046
 Devil Doll Recs, PO Box 30727, Long Beach, CA 90853
 Devil In The Woods, PO Box 11348, Berkeley, CA 94712
 Dischord, 3819 Beecher St., NW, Washington, DC 20007
 Dog Day, 4432 Telegraph Ave. #72, Oakland, CA 94609
 Dr. Strange, PO Box 7000-117, Alta Loma, CA 91701
 Dynamo Hum, PO Box 9253, Calabasas, CA 91372
 ear X-tacy, 1534 Bardstown Rd., Louisville, KY 40205
 Egon, 3209 N. Stanton, El Paso, TX 79902
 Elevator Music, PO Box 1502, New Haven, CT 06505
 Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026
 Equal Vision Records, PO Box 14, Hudson, NY 12534
 Exit Records, PO Box 263, New York, NY 10012
 Fat Wreck, PO Box 193690, San Fran, CA 94779-3690
 Fuzzy Comets, 625 Edmond St., Pittsburgh, PA 15224
 G-7, PO Box 3-905, Corydon, Winnipeg, MB, R3M-3S3, Canada
 Gem Blandsten, PO Box 358, River Edge, NJ 07661
 Get Hip Records, PO Box 886, Canonsburg, PA 15317
 Go Kart, PO Box 28, Prince Street Stat., NY, NY 10012
 Guilt Ridden Pop, 2217 Nicollet Ave., So. Minn., MN 55404
 Harmless Records, 1437 W. Hood, Chicago, IL 60660
 Helicat Records, 2798 Sunset Blvd., LA, CA 90026
 Honest Don's, PO Box 192027, San Francisco, CA 94119
 Initial Records, PO Box 17131, Louisville, KY 40217
 Inzane Recs, 4570 Van Nuys Blvd., Ste. 303, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
 Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd., Wilmington, DE 19810
 Jonesbox, 173 Gates St., Palm Bay, FL 32908
 K Records, PO Box 7154, Olympia, WA 98507
 Konkurrent c/o Southern, PO Box 577375, Chicago, IL 60657
 Kool Arrow Records, 5902 Monterey Road #666, Los Angeles, CA 90042
 Liberation Records, PO Box 17746, Anaheim, CA 92817
 Lookout! Records, PO Box 11374, Berkeley, CA 94712-2374
 Makoto Recordings, PO Box 50403, Kalamazoo, MI 49005
 Man's Ruin Records, 610 22nd Street #302, San Francisco, CA 94107
 MIA Records, 315 Church St., 2nd Fl., NY, NY 10013
 Mindwalk, PO Box 22514, Philadelphia, PA 19110-2514
 Mordam Records, PO Box 420988, San Francisco, CA 94124-0988
 My Own Planet, PO Box 95921, Seattle, WA 98145
 Nitro Records, 7071 Warner Ave. F-736, Huntington Beach, CA 92647
 Noisemo Records, PO Box 3570, Lawrence, KS 66046
 Panic Button, PO Box 148010, Chicago, IL 60614-8010
 Peachy Way, 16843 Valley Blvd., Ste. E509, Fontana, CA 92335
 Pessimiser, PO Box 1070, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254
 Polyvinyl Records, PO Box 1885, Danville, IL 61834
 Pop Rock It, PO Box 163124, Sacramento, CA 95816-9124
 Quarterstick Records, PO Box 25342, Chicago, IL 60625
 Revelation Records, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA, 92615-5232
 Rocket Dog Records, PO Box 70397, 1007 KJ Amsterdam, Holland
 Rockhouse Recordings, 52 Collis Street, West Haven, CT 06516
 Sealed Fate Records, PO Box 9183 #120, Cambridge, MA 02139
 Sessions Records, 15 Janis Way, Scotts Valley, CA 95066
 Seth Yacovone Blues Band, Box 112 Winooski, VT 05404
 Side 1, 6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028
 Skunk Records, 6285 E. Spring Street, #234, Long Beach, CA 90808
 Soda Jerk Records, PO Box 4056, Boulder, CO 80306
 Sonic Uryon, Box 57347, Jackson Stat., Hamilton, ON Canada 18P 4X2
 Southern Records, PO Box 577375, Chicago, IL 60657
 Steadman, PO Box 85, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 1WA, UK
 Sub City, PO Box 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409
 Suburban Home, 1750 30th Street, #365, Boulder, CO 80301
 Sugar Daddy Productions, PO Box 328, Zieglerville, PA 19492
 Suicidal Records, 6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028
 Super 6 Records, PO Box 76022, St. Petersburg, FL 33734
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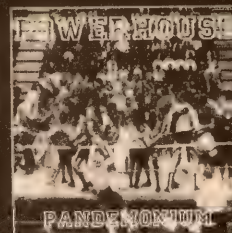


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EVERYONE

By Sam Silva

art by Eachean Edmundson

"Having taken note of the initial U.S. objection to a general International Tribunal at the Hague, whose blunt assessment was that American citizens could easily be prosecuted."

It was a great moral victory for such a melting pot as our own when the North prevented the succession of the southern states and Sherman burned a hole in the South after draft riots hit the northeast and official press censorship ensured a wholly united army for freedom. Because slaves were elevated to the status of second or third class citizens, and because the business concerns in the U.S. were served when their own fledgling industries could be babied and encouraged and to that extent the nation prospered.



It was likewise a great moral victory, when the federal systems in eastern Europe crumbled at the West's behest, cutting their own GNP by a third, and living on oil revenues and borrowed time. Because it is simply too much to expect for people whose ethnic origins are different to somehow manage to get along especially when they desire separation. And so we take it upon ourselves to provide a world full of small struggling independent states. Because, after all, unrestricted trade will benefit their development more than anything else could, and a cheap labor market will keep their raw resources cheap. So that our manufactured goods can be sold at bigger and better profits to ourselves, as the standard of living gets better ...to the extent that all of our businesses flourish. And...yes!...you see now how "everyone"benefits?

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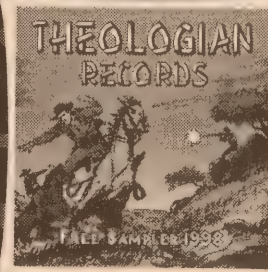
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THE APACHE HELICOPTER awaiting action in Yugoslavia is perhaps the perfect symbol for what U.S.-led NATO is doing in the Balkans. The good guys, NATO, we are told, are bombing the daylight out of Yugoslavia in order to prevent ethnic cleansing by the Hitler of the Month, Milosevic.

A look at history, though, reveals that the "good guys" are nothing but a

Manifest Destiny - Hidden behind a Cloak of Humanitarianism

By K. Shreeram

gang of thugs — heads of former colonial and current imperialist powers responsible for most of history's genocides, ethnic cleansings, and pillages.

In the area encompassed by what is the United States today, between 1500 and 1900, the Native American population was decimated from about 12.5 million to less than 250,000. In the Americas and the Caribbean, about 100 million of the estimated 125 million Native Americans were systematically slaughtered following the arrival of Columbus.

This genocide continues to this day. According to historian Ward Churchill, "Between the 1880s and the 1980s, nearly half of all Native American children were coercively transferred from their own families, communities, and cultures to those of the conquering society." In 1975, the U.S. government admitted that it was conducting involuntary sterilizations that affected about 40 percent of Native American women in the United States.

This same colonial mentality was responsible for the deaths of an estimated 75 million African slaves en route to the Americas. Today, the descendants of slaves in the United States are being criminalized and incarcerated in record numbers, with one in three Black men between the ages of 15 to 29 either behind bars, on parole or awaiting trial.

Between 1880 and 1920, French colonialists wiped out two-thirds of population of what is today the Congo. In the 1880s, Belgian colonialists, under King Leopold II, were responsible for the genocide of 10 million people in the region that is today the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire).

Between 1899 and 1902 U.S. forces, led by General Arthur MacArthur killed more than half a million Filipinos struggling for independence.

Soon after, another white icon, Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State at the British War Office, had this to say about the use of chemical weapons on Iraqis revolting against British rule: "I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using (it) against uncivilized tribes."

That is just the tip of the bloody iceberg, but for those who consider all this to be ancient history and irrelevant to current war against Yugoslavia; There are plenty of recent mass murders to go around.

In 1965 U.S.-backed General Suharto overthrew Sukarno in coup that killed about a million people.

In the 1970s and '80s, the US-backed Guatemalan government killed more than 200,000, mainly indigenous, people. "Clinton went to Guatemala and apologized for this," says Sheridan Murphy, Executive Director of the Florida chapter of the American Indian Movement. "So why doesn't NATO simply ask Milosevic to apologize for his ethnic cleansing?"

In Vietnam, the U.S. killed an estimated 1.5 million Vietnamese. The U.S. carpet bombing of Cambodia and Laos, between 1969 and 1975, killed an estimated 1 million civilians. Another 1 million or so died due to the subsequent starvation following the devastation to Cambodian agriculture.

As Edward Herman put it in a 1997 *Z Magazine* article: "Henry Kissinger's role in the Cambodian genocide, Chile, and East Timor, makes him a first class war criminal, arguably at least in the class of Hitler's Foreign Minister Joachim Von Ribbentrop, hanged in 1946."

Instead, Kissinger received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973 for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.

Since World War II, the United States has bombed 25 different countries and invaded, toppled governments, or otherwise intervened 40 different times in other countries. The U.S. sells more weapons than any other country in the world. In short, it is the greatest purveyor of violence and death on earth.

Germany's genocide of more than six million Jews and Gypsies is of course, well known to us. It was in the wake of that ethnic cleansing that the Geneva

Convention was passed by the UN General Assembly in 1948. Incredibly, the term genocide didn't exist before 1944. Only when whites targeted other Europeans for liquidation did the colonialists find it necessary to condemn a practice that had been the hallmark of European civilization for more than 450 years.

Not surprisingly, it took the United States 40 years to ratify the Geneva Convention, albeit with the following self-serving caveat: "Nothing in the Convention requires or authorizes legislation or other action by the United States of America prohibited by the Constitution of the United States as interpreted by the United States."

The list of genocides perpetrated by countries that lead NATO is endless, and there is no shortage of bloody dictators backed by the U.S. and European powers, but there is one ongoing genocide that must be mentioned. It is the U.S.-forced "genocide by sanctions" of Iraqis. Since they were imposed in 1991, the sanctions have killed 1.5 million Iraqis — about six percent of the population. More than half of those killed are children. More than 250 Iraqis, mostly children under five, die each day because of starvation and disease induced by the sanctions. Iraq's once-stellar health care system, that guaranteed free medical care for all its citizens, is in shambles. Surgery is routinely conducted without anesthesia. The per capita GNP has dropped from \$2400 before the Gulf War to \$247 this year. Of course, the sanctions are necessary, we are told, to get rid of Saddam Hussein, the Hitler of the Month before Milosevic took over.

The claim by U.S.-led NATO that it is bombing Yugoslavia to prevent ethnic cleansing by Milosevic should be met with incredulity. Instead what we hear is the self-righteous cheerleading from the mainstream U.S. media.

Yes, Milosevic and Saddam Hussein are despicable tyrants. But they are part of a long list of dictators and tyrants, most of whom are in power today precisely because of U.S. policies. Besides, if Saddam Hussein is a tyrant and war criminal for his political repression that has killed about 100,000 Iraqis, according to Amnesty International, in what criminal category does that place the likes of George Bush, Bill Clinton, and Tony Blair? While Hussein came to power in a coup, the latter three were "democratically" elected. But just because they were elected doesn't make them any less responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

When the Americans decide to go after a particular dictator, one needs to look beyond the rhetoric of the official reasons.

According to NATO, in the year preceding the beginning of NATO attacks, 2,000 people died in the conflict in Kosovo. Two months of NATO bombing have already killed the same number of people. Before NATO began its attacks, the fighting in Kosovo had created about 300,000 refugees. (Incidentally, policies of the U.S.-backed and armed Colombian government have resulted in more deaths and a refugee population of more than 1.5 million, but you don't hear a peep out of Washington about that.) The NATO bombings and the predictable Serb reaction to it have propelled that figure

to almost one million refugees.

The Rambouillet Accord was worded in order to guarantee its rejection by the Milosevic government. The accord reads in part: "NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft, and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the FRY (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)."

"This passage sounds like a surrender treaty following a war that was lost.... The fact that Yugoslav President Milosevic did not want to sign such a paper is understandable," said Germany's *Berliner Zeitung*.

No sovereign nation would ever sign a treaty that voluntarily authorized an occupying force. According to an April 8 *New York Times* article, "just before the bombing, when [Yugoslavia] rejected NATO troops in Kosovo, it also supported the idea of a United Nations force to monitor a political settlement there."

When other NATO members suggested that a resolution be submitted to the UN Security Council authorizing the deployment of NATO forces, the U.S. rejected the proposal. The way Michael Parenti sees it, "The dismemberment and mutilation of the Yugoslav federation is part of a concerted policy initiated by the United States and the other Western powers in 1989. Yugoslavia was the one country in Eastern Europe that would not voluntarily overthrow what remained of its socialist system and install a free-market economic order. The U.S. goal has been to transform Yugoslavia into a cluster of weak right-wing principalities..."

The United States is now the sole superpower in the world. It does not tolerate dissent. The current assault on Yugoslavia is geared toward reasserting its domination of NATO, as well as the rest of world. Maverick regimes such as Yugoslavia and Iraq will not be tolerated. Even the UN Security Council, a highly undemocratic regimen, is no longer adequate. The United States, using NATO as a shield, can and will do anything it wants to, anywhere it pleases.

That was made clear at the 50th anniversary NATO summit in Washington in April. "We have reaffirmed our readiness... to address regional and ethnic conflicts beyond the territory of NATO members," Clinton said at the summit.

In an op-ed, Siddharth Varadarajan, a *Times of India* editor, suggest that "the principles on which its current aggression against Yugoslavia is based... include: an expanded definition of what constitutes a threat to the security of the 'Euro-Atlantic area', the subordination of European strategic interests to that of the US, and, above all, the same unilateralism which led NATO to attack a sovereign country in violation of international law."

Such an expanded vision of NATO violates international law as well as NATO's own charter.

As Walter J. Rockler, a Washington lawyer who was a prosecutor at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial, pointed out recently in a *Chicago Tribune* op-ed, the attack on Yugoslavia not only violates the UN Charter, but the judgment of the International Court in Nuremberg Tribunal as well: "To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime, it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

"Shouting 'war criminal' only emphasizes that those who live in glass houses should be careful about throwing stones," Rockler adds.

If there is to be any justice in this world, the first step should be to forever ban the United States and its NATO factotums from intervening anywhere in the world. They have repeatedly shown their true colors. Asking the U.S. to fight ethnic cleansing is like asking a serial rapist to administer a rape crisis center.

As a political cartoon, in the Italian newspaper *Liberazione*, asked: "Why is it the Apache helicopter that the US deploys in the Balkans? Manifest destiny?"

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Sex, Lies and Television's Children

By K.
Shreeram
and
Rebecca
Johns

Even as Bill Clinton, in the wake of the Columbine High School massacre, was busy mouthing platitudes about "hammer(ing) home to all the children of America that violence is wrong," he was escalating the bombing of Yugoslavia and Iraq.

Apparently he had never heard the old adage of child psychology — "Children do what we do, not what we say."

It was the same week that our 6-year-old asked us if Clinton was going to bomb Florida and whether NATO was taking over the world.

As parents, we have the unenviable task of explaining to our children why our government keeps bombing other countries.

We began to deal with this dilemma last autumn, when the media world turned around the Bill and Monica soap opera. A significant part of the coverage dealt with the problem of explaining the "immoral actions" of our president to our children. At that time, our son came up to me while I was reading the newspaper, which had a huge photo of Bill Clinton on the front page.

"That's Bill Clinton," Nikhil asked.

"Yes," I said.

"Dad, what did Bill Clinton do?" he asked.

"He bombed Sudan and Afghanistan."

Nikhil walked away. That was not quite what he had expected to hear. He had heard his friends talk at school, and the U.S. bombing was not the subject of those conversations.

He came back in a bit. "No, that's not it. What else did he DO?"

The child psychologists and right-wing family valuers were in full bloom. "It's all over television," they ranted, "how do we explain this immoral behavior to our children?"

We explained what Clinton had done vis a vis Lewinsky.

"Clinton had sex with someone other than his partner, and he lied about it to the country. But, we think it is something for Clinton, his partner Hillary and Monica Lewinsky to work out."



Despite the concern of the child experts and media pundits, we had little difficulty explaining to our child what had occurred between Clinton and Lewinsky.

Explaining the bombing of Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Yugoslavia has proved far more difficult a task.

"Why did Clinton bomb those countries," Nikhil asked.

How does one explain to a child why our government bombed two countries halfway around the globe?

And, yes, the bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan was all over television too, just as the war against Yugoslavia has been. But gone are the child development experts and the family valuers. No sage advice is forthcoming about how parents might explain this one to their kids. No talk about the immorality of killing, of violating international law, of the dishonest claims that our government bombed a chemical weapons plant. Nope. Clinton lying about Lewinsky is a moral outrage. Clinton lying about a pharmaceutical company in Sudan he had just leveled is not. Having extramarital sex is immoral; killing Afghans and Iraqis and Serbs is not.

What impact does the televised bombing of other countries and distant peoples - "different" from "us", have on children? When they see footage of U.S. bombings presented uncritically as a video game pilots play, our kids likely draw their own conclusions.

Make An IMPACT on A.I.D.S

By
Jeffrey-
John
Nunziata

Please email any questions to Jeff at:
sk8trboy@mindspring.com

If we choose your question we will send you a hell a kool safer sex gift pack with lots of assorted condoms and lubes!

Readers, sorry about missing the last issue, but some unexpected stuff came up. From now on I will reply to each question that is asked by email or regular mail if it does not get printed in the current issue.

Q: "Ha this question is probably going to seem pretty lame but I am curious about what type of condom is best to use for the different types of sex. I heard something on a radio station here in Atlanta about some new condom that is better for oral and anal sex. And if you pick my question and send me

the condoms and stuff send me some of those cool types of condoms. THANKS A LOT! "

Allan, 16
Atlanta

A: Actually this is a really good question, so much so that I decided that we should print it. Regular condoms which are made of latex are actually licensed medical devices from the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) that are supposed to be used for a specific type of sex... penis vagina sex. Latex condoms were designed for and tested simulating vaginal intercourse. They can be used for anal and oral sex, but they were not designed for that. Polyurethane condoms are stronger than latex condoms and they are preferred for both anal and vaginal intercourse, because they do not break so easily. There are male condoms made

of polyurethane that are available, but there aren't many out there. Avanti male condoms are made of polyurethane, as is the Reality female condom.

If you can not find polyurethane male condoms for anal intercourse, you can use the female condom. You can insert it into the anus, as you would the vagina. Some people like to take the inner ring out of the female condom, but that's more a comfort thing for the recipient partner. What ever works best for you is kool... ring or no ring.

I'll be sending you some of those polyurethane condoms with your shipment of goodies.

If you want to mail letters to an address....

Jeffrey-John Nunziata
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about why such attacks are acceptable. Do they become inured to war waged on "other" people? Do they end up seeing those "other" people as somewhat less than we are? Are we molding our kids to be racists and future patriots who support every U.S. military escapade that comes along? Are we teaching them that violence is, indeed, "the answer"?

We took Nikhil to the globe, showed him where Sudan and Afghanistan were. Told him that the United States was like a schoolyard bully, beating up on smaller, less powerful countries. "It's like when a bully wants your toy and you won't give it to him and he beats you up and takes it. You understand?"

He nodded.

"That's what our government often does. And people die as a result."

"Kids too?"

"Yes."

He nodded again, teary-eyed.

"But people can change things. You remember the demonstration we went to months ago, protesting the bombing of Iraq?"

"Yah."

"Well, we were trying to change things."

If our son has nightmares these days they are likely about bombs and planes roaring overhead in the night. About why some kids are more valuable than others. About wondering which kind of kid he is, the valuable kind or the disposable kind.

The week after the bombings of Yugoslavia began, Nikhil came home from school and told us he had played a new game with his friends on the playground. The new game was called War. He asked me if I wanted to play. I said no.

"Why not, Mommy?" he said. "We don't use guns, we must march around like this." He goose-stepped around the kitchen.

"Because I don't like war, honey. War is not a game. War destroys people's homes and kills them," I said sadly. I asked him if it was a new game, or if they had played it before. He said it was new.

"I guess your friends thought up this new game because the newspaper is full of stories about the war against Yugoslavia," I said.

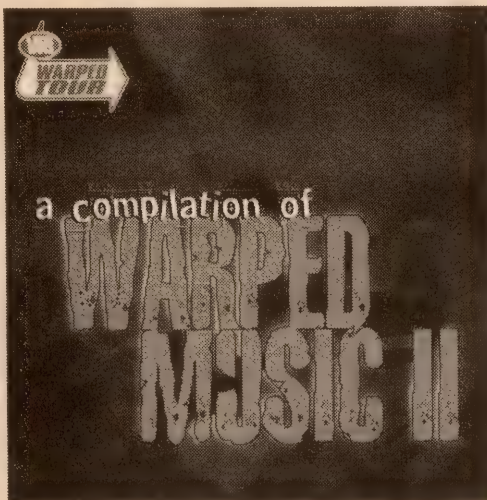
"Show me the newspaper," he said.

Together we looked at the front page, which showed a bombed out residential neighborhood somewhere in Yugoslavia, with people picking through the rubble. Nikhil looked at it for a long time, then he went away.

After a little while, he came back.

"Bill Clinton is a dummy head," he said.

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600 BC - The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were constructed by King Nebuchadnezzar II as a gift to his wife. The kings in the surrounding territories never hear the end of it from their wives.

284 AD - Diocletian becomes Emperor of Rome. Everyone giggles at the coronation every time his name is mentioned, because it sounds like a female body part.

1764 AD - The Sugar Act is instituted. Three of their singles go platinum.

1908 AD - Melvin Dewey develops the Dewey decimal system for libraries. Previously, the Fahrenheit system was used.

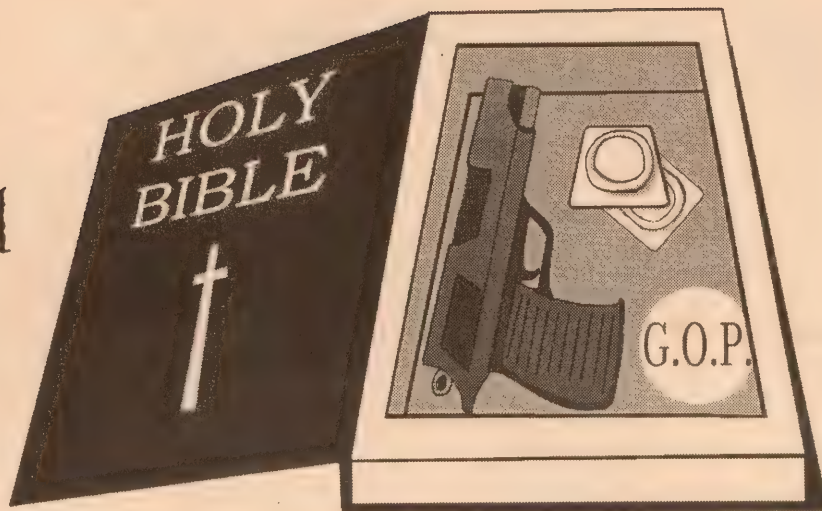
1977 AD - Star Wars is still number one at the box office firmly establishing George Lucas as the "King of the Geeks."

One Year Ago Today - Beanie Babies are being sold for thousands of dollars apiece to collectors. TY, the manufacturer of Beanie Babies, asks the collectors to get a life.

I Wish I'd Said That - "Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life." - Brooke Shields, attempting to demonstrate why she should become spokesperson for a federal antismoking campaign.

This Week In History is brought to you by Rush Limbaugh, where the truth is not only **stranger** than fiction, but usually **is** fiction.

Right-Wing Ignorance, Blatant Lies and the Continued Threat to our Civil Liberties



Conservative America Asleep at the Wheel

by Jeffrey-John Nunziata • art by Eachean Edmundson

There is a current trend in the game of American politics where our nation as a whole is sending more conservative politicians to represent them on the local, state and national level. This trend is starting to have repercussions all over the nation. Our rights as Americans and our civil liberties are coming under attack more frequently. Sometimes these attacks are quite blatant, and other times they are disguised and somewhat more insidious. Sometimes hidden behind the rhetoric of politics is a more sinister monster not so easily apparent.

SEX! Now there's something that the conservative Republican element doesn't like to talk about in public. They are against sexual education in and out of school, the open discussion of sexual issues, rights for sexual minorities and STD/HIV/Safer Sex education. Considering that they are somewhat Puritanical you would think that individuals of this character would avoid the discussion of sexual related issues and their sordid details at any cost. No such luck. They were all for the discussion of sex when it was relevant to the possible impeachment of the president. Republicans were running around rubbing their hands together and talking about very specific sex acts. I don't think I have ever heard that much talk about sex coming out of Congress.

Members of Congress went on CSPAN talking about "oral sex", "blow jobs" and other sexual practices involving a cigar. It's kind of odd how, on one hand they continue to keep their minds closed so they can justify the refusal of sex education for teenagers, and yet the discussion of sex when it concerns political gain is all right. What about the sex life of all the teenagers out there? Don't their lives mean anything? When I called the Republican National Committee about this issue, they treated me as a prank caller. I guess

they still don't want to deal with anything sexual that might actually help someone. They only seem to want to discuss sexual related issues when they have the potential to hurt someone or cause harm. Especially when that person is on the opposite side of the political aisle.

Being American we are constantly exposed to political mythology, not unlike that of the former Soviet Union. There is truth, and then there are lies. Sometimes it's in the best interest of your political agenda to lie, and lies are continually spouted by the Christian radical Right. Specifically, I am referring to the continued references of how the founding fathers of this country were all God fearing Christians. You know what I am talking about... "We need to return to the good Christian values of our founding fathers. Men like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson." After just a little bit of research, any one of you can learn that this statement is pure folly. George Washington and several other early presidents were not Christians! They were Deists. George Washington was even quoted, when the Treaty of Tripoli was signed, as saying this country should never become a nation based on Christianity! Yeah, that's right. But like all that Paul Revere stuff, it doesn't matter what the truth is; the Christian political movement has taken our forefathers and turned them into Christian Saints of some sort to serve their political means. I must therefore assume that it's easier to convince ignorant Americans that it's okay to take away our rights if "George Washington, who was a good Christian" would want it that way.

When you think about what living in the USA means to you, many of us think of one word, FREEDOM. That's sort of the catchphrase for our country. Many of us like to think that we are not only living in the

home of the brave but also in the land of the free. "America stands for freedom. That's why we fight the wars we do, to protect freedom to defend the flag and to die for it."

The Conservative political agenda in this country wants to take the American flag, the symbol many of us consider a symbol of freedom, and create a constitutional amendment to make it illegal to burn it. Think about this just for a moment. They want to take away your freedom to burn the symbol that stands for freedom. It's simply moronic. I heard some Southern Republican congressman ranting on CSPAN about how "veterans died all over the world to protect the flag." I would hope that there is not a single person who gave their life for the flag. I do hope that there are individuals who gave their lives for the principles that the flag stands for, principles like freedom, liberty, and justice for all. Somewhere along the way, Conservatives have once again transformed this symbol of freedom into a sort of banner for their political game plan.

Governor Bush of Texas, soon to be President Bush, recently had dozens of protestors arrested for protesting in front of the Governor's Mansion. The protestors did not block access or travel to and from the Governor's Mansion in Austin, and yet he had them arrested. I think someone needs to remind the elder Bush brother about the Constitution of the United States and some of its key points. The right to free speech and assembly are cornerstones of our nation. When I contacted the Governor's office, they gave me some politicized nonsense. So I reminded them of the fact that these rights are part of the foundation of our democracy. Their response was

an uncomfortable silence followed by, "Is there anything else we can do for you?" You get the picture.

Is it a surprise to anyone on the liberal side of the fence how many of the right-wing politicians and political groups responded to the Colorado killings? One Republican Colorado Congressman stated "It might be a good idea if the principle and teachers had weapons to protect themselves from troubled students." (The scary thing is that people actually voted for this moron!) Hey, I have an idea. Lets get rid of the guns; that might help.

Look at countries like Japan, Canada and the United Kingdom. They have nowhere near as many shootings and killings as we do per percentage of the population. That's because they don't have anywhere near the percentage of guns in their society. If you want to see people stop killing each other, get rid of the guns. I'm sure that those two troubled kids in Colorado still could have killed some students, but it would not have been to the same extent if the guns were removed. Crime would still occur, but not at the insane rate that we have now. Use your heads, guys; it's a no brainer.

American society is taking steps backwards, and it is the responsibility of all of us to take some sort of action to stop this decline. We all need to take some action and stop the current moves toward the rape of our civil liberties. We need to call people on their bad political decisions and their lies. For we are the true moral majority, but the sad truth is that so many of us are content to sit back on the sidelines as our rights and liberties are lost for "ourselves and our posterity."

WHAT A COMP!!!



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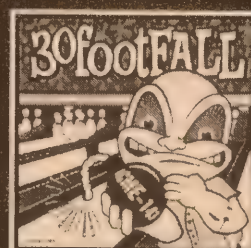
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The Cost of a Full Stomach

by Craig Mazer

There are mass murderers on the loose, legally killing time and time again. As a matter of fact, these hired assassins take over 660,000 lives per hour. Nearly every person in the United States supports this evil business – the needless slaughter of animals for food.

Humans are, dietarily speaking, an ignorant, heartless bunch. We insist upon taking the lives of innocent, helpless animals to satisfy a false concept of what our diet should be. From this we derive the right to murder, or at least be an accomplice to murder. For the suffering of these animals, whether from the process of being killed or simply in the confinement they face while being "farmed", we benefit with a full stomach.

That full stomach is just one part of the greedy, selfish human whole. For the most part, humans have been able to ignore the health benefits of an animal-free diet and are blind to the obvious moral and ethical issues regarding the unnecessary killing of millions of animals for our extravagant tastes.

However, no one can ignore the truths of factory farming, the process by which most animals are raised for food. The realities of the confinement, mistreatment and overcrowding are nauseating. This article will not cover all the aspects of factory farming, but is an attempt to give an overview into a frightening world you may not be aware of.

BEEF

"A lot of times the skinner finds a cow is still conscious when he slices the side of its head and it starts kicking wildly. If that happens, the skinner shoves a knife into the back of its head to cut the spinal cord (This paralyzes the animal, but doesn't stop the pain of being skinned alive)," said a cow slaughterhouse worker. And still another worker on calf slaughter: "To get done with them faster, we'd put eight or nine of them in the knocking box at a time... You start shooting, the calves are jumping, they're all piling up on top of each other. You don't know which ones got shot and which didn't... They're hung anyway, and down the line they go, wriggling and yelling."



Most cattle are left to fend for themselves on the range for months, sometimes years, at a time. This exposes the animal to all kinds of inclement weather causing some to freeze to death or die from dehydration. Because the cattle are free to roam for such a long time, when they are herded to be sold, they are often traumatized by the presence of humans. It is this transportation of the animals that often causes them to be injured. Ranchers also still brand their cattle. There are two types of markings used – branding, a painful procedure of burning a mark into the cow's hide; and wad-dling, which entails cutting chunks out of the hide which hangs under the animals' necks.

Cattle, for the most part, spend the last few months of their life in feedlots where they are crowded together with thousands of oth-

ers in unsafe conditions. While there, they are fed unnaturally rich diets designed to fatten them quickly and profitably.

At a standard beef slaughterhouse, 250 cattle are killed every hour. As the assembly line speeds up, workers are rushed, and it becomes increasingly difficult to treat animals with any semblance of humaneness. The cattle are strung up by their back legs and bled to death after they are rendered unconscious. This is done by hitting the animal in the head, however this is terribly imprecise and often leads to a conscious animal having its throat slit while dangling in the air.

PORK

"The preferred method of handling a cripple is to beat him to death with a lead pipe before he gets into the chute... If you get a hog in a chute that's had the shit prod-ded out of him, and has a heart attack or refuses to move, you take a meat hook and hook it into his bunghole (anus)...and a lot of times the meat hook rips out of the bunghole. I've seen thighs completely ripped open. I've also seen intestines come out." — a pig slaughterhouse worker.



Approximately 100 million pigs are raised and slaughtered in the U.S. every year. As babies, they are subjected to painful mutilations without anesthesia or pain relievers. The piglets' tails are cut off to minimize tail biting, an aberrant behavior that occurs when these highly intelligent animals are kept in deprived factory farm environments. In addition, notches are taken out of the piglets' ears for identification.

At 2 to 3 weeks of age, the piglets are taken away from their mothers, by which time, approximately 15% will have died. The surviving piglets are crowded into pens with metal bars and concrete floors. The pigs are then slaughtered around the age of 6 months, weighing around 250 pounds.

Modern breeding sows are treated like piglet-making machines. Living a continuous cycle of impregnation and birth, the sows each have more than 20 piglets per year. Hog factories strive to keep their sows '100 % active', as an article in *Successful Farming* explains, "Any sow that is not gestating, lactating or within seven days post weaning is non-active." When the sow is no longer deemed a productive breeder, she is sent to slaughter.

Pigs, like cattle, are strung upside down to be slaughtered. Prior to this they are stunned, however, like with cattle, it is not always effective. Workers will then try to stick the still living pigs with a knife to the throat. If that is unsuccessful, the pigs are moved to the next station on the assembly line and boiled alive. A worker comments on the procedure: "If the hog is conscious, ... it takes a long time for him to bleed out. These hogs get up to the scalding tank, hit the water, and start kicking and screaming... There's a rotating arm that pushes them under. No chance for them to get out. I am not sure if they burn to death before they drown, but it takes them a couple of minutes to stop thrashing."

IN CONCLUSION

These are only a couple aspects of the evils of factory farming and in the big picture, the evil of eating animals. The farming of poultry,

(MEAT, continued on page 46)

A Patriotic Left

By Rodrick Colbert • art by Eachean Edmundson

"We have an interesting political system in the United States. It's different from the other industrialized democracies. It is a very free country. The state is very restricted in its capacity to coerce and control us, even compared to other industrialized democracies."

— Noam Chomsky

Is the title of this essay an oxymoron? Can a member of the Left be patriotic? If we put aside the geographic beauty of the United States, the very fact that this view is being analyzed would not only suggest yes, but that the Left should be one of patriotism's staunchest vanguards. For the Left had been the very architects and the guardians of the freedoms to which American values aspire.

First, according to *Funk & Wagnalls, New Standard Dictionary*, patriotism is defined as "love of and devotion to one's country; the spirit that, originating in love of country, prompts obedience to its laws, to the support and defense of its existence, rights, and institutions, and to the promotion of its welfare."

Given that definition, there are an abundance of reasons why America's strongest critics would be anything but patriotic. The legacy of slavery and the racial divide seems to deny any hope that this nation will ever stand up for justice. In fact, books written by civil rights activist, Mary Frances Berry such as *Black Resistance, White Law* or *Long Memory, The Black Experience in America*, articulate well the injustices committed against African-Americans, injustices made permissible by the America's legal institutions. This, undoubtedly, is America's biggest disgrace.

Then there is the commercial exploitation. This exploitation is spawned from a unique American system based on economic ownership propped up by a social Darwinist attitude rooted in selfishness and the reduction of humans to commodities. Moreover, there is the American media in all its arrogance, with its pretense of objectivity. Instead, it serves only to manufacture universal consent and to marginalize the population into apathy or nihilism. Nothing there to love.

The institution of which the left is the most critical is the military. Note that implied in the definition of patriotism is the sentiment that a patriot defends its country's interests. For the left, the American military interest has always been to perpetuate existing national and international overlords and to ensure their mastery of all the economic resources of the planet. This currently is taking place in Kosovo.

However, to analyze the theme of a patriotic American left, it is necessary to return to the country's origin, revolutionary America. Setting aside the fact that those who lead the fight of the Revolutionary War were wealthy white male landowners, the events of America in 1776 were just as revolutionary as in Cuba in 1959. In his treaty, *History will Absolve Me*, Fidel Castro passionately cites the classic words of the Declaration of Independence as an inspiration to self-determination.

Indeed, America was founded on radical principles, and Thomas Paine was its Minister of Ideology. Thomas Paine wrote, "Society in every state is a blessing, but government even its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one."

Thomas Paine was the first American radical and a true patriot. He loved the ideals of freedom and felt that these freedoms merited vigilant safeguarding. Paine traveled to France to spread the concept of liberty. His book, *The Rights of Man*, enshrines the very American value that these rights are basic human rights and that they are derived naturally. However, it would take time for America to live up to this value.

Our next American patriot, Frederick Douglass, had a mind so

keenly brilliant, that his words inspired international movements to abolish slavery. Douglass' oratorical masterpiece, "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro" calls into question the morality of the rights enshrined by the Constitution.

Douglass wails:

"I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common, The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn."

Douglass points out in his speech that for freedom to have any value in must be inclusive, pervasive, and genuine. Manifest in this was that Douglass was an early supporter of women's suf-

frage. Douglas was hopeful that since the moral pretext for abolition was already recorded in America's birth certificate, they only needed to be carried forward. This is the lesson of the slave ship Amistad. The original intent of the Constitution's framers would allow for future changes that would sharpen America's value of freedom and commitment to a just society

However, America is a slow learner. Martin Luther King would pivot his crusade for equality on these same appeals to freedom. His "I have a Dream" and "Let Freedom Ring" speeches are overflowing with appeals to the basic American value of liberty, equality, and



(LEFT, continued on page 46)

Critique the critics

(CRITICISM, continued from page 8)

and restaurants." Well, I've reviewed hardware stores, and doctors probably should get reviewed.

Here's one that I've heard a lot: "No one critiques the critics." That's an interesting one. Sometimes they are, but it's well after the fact, as in an anthology of Mark Twain's literary criticism, for example. If you look at the phenomenon historically, you'll see that criticism is one of the forces that shapes culture, so critics probably should get reviewed. More often, however, critics get paid to freely judge and evaluate the work of artists who, mainly for the love of culture, dedicate a lot of time and talent to its creation.

Since they sometimes hold a good deal of power over the success and even survival of an artist or institution, a critic should be held accountable. Their qualifications should fall under scrutiny—just because someone is a competent journalist does not mean that they are prepared to pass judgement on a work of art. Their political, social, and artistic agendas should be analyzed and evaluated for their integrity and for their potential effect on the artistic life of the community within which they earn their bread. Their cleverness as writers should be evaluated to ensure that it does not overwhelm the work reviewed.

However, the job is already pretty tough. Sitting through half-dozen plays or movies in a week—or even a month—is probably no picnic. Balancing your agenda to support the artistic community that supports you—versus your responsibility to the readers (and being willing, therefore, to point out when a work doesn't "work") could at times be a daunting task, as well.

Probably, no one is going to take on the task of reviewing the reviewers. So it's up to you. Read criticism critically. Realize that out of the thousand things that run through a critic's mind, he or she is forced to narrow them down to a few hundred words worth or so. Above all, keep pointing out those things you find worth mentioning that the rest of us critics overlooked.

N-word is destructive

(N-WORD, continued from page 9)

Nigger Charlie.

Many times when I write, my superfly, bad nigga side comes out. What I mean by that is being outspoken, saying what I feel like saying and not bowing down to please other people. This is what a bad nigga would be in the 'hood.

Even Martin Luther King Jr would be considered a bad nigga. Violent or non-violent, any brother that stands up to the white man is considered a bad nigga.

I ask myself should African-Americans stop saying the n-word. Yes, even though I say it myself, I think we really should. Us saying it only makes white people think it's okay for them to say it, too. Also, I'm tired of hearing white hip-hop kids saying it.

Progressive Left

(LEFT, continued from page 45)

freedom from tyranny. Indeed, his most common quote is "a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This is a classic American value and very much worth defending.

One summer during high school, I remember taking the bus to the downtown Tampa Library and purchasing for 25 cents in the section of books that were been discarded a book was called, "Critics of Society, Radical Thought in North America" by T.B. Bottomore. The import that I took from this book is that in America (indeed, in ever society), there are those critical voices, very loud voice, yet, necessary voices that really improve our nation. The Left and other dissenters have improved society. Being a leftist almost implies being intensely dedicated to equity and social justice. All social progress in this nation came from the America's progressive voices.

Consequently, whether it has been names such as Upton Sinclair, Susan B. Anthony, Rosa Parks, or corporate whistle blowers, prisoner rights activists, union organizers, or any one, in the black civil right tradition motif, is tired of "being sick and tired" should feel that they can be patriotic. It is an expression of love of this country to be critical of it and to want it to work for all its citizens. A truly unpatriotic person would not care to be involved. For this reason, of all the patriotic songs, my favorite has always been, "This Land is Your Land."

Growing older

(OLDER, continued from page 19)

experiences, giving faculty and staff an idea of these students' perspectives. The email warns, "just in case you weren't feeling too old today, this will certainly change things."

This year's list contains 40 or so items—some are funny; others aren't. For example, from a political perspective, this year's freshmen were prepubescent during the Gulf War, they do not remember the Cold War, and they have never really feared nuclear war. To them, "The Day After" is a pill, not a movie.

Using technological advances for a timeline, these freshmen were about a year old when CD's and Sony Walkman were introduced. Most have never owned a record player, played Pong, or seen a TV set with only 13 channels.

Most of these kids also have no clue about experiences and trends that were popular when we were growing up. They ask questions like "Who's JR, and who cares who shot him?"... "There used to be beige M&M's?"... "Kansas, Chicago, Boston, and Alabama are groups, not places?"... "Jordache jeans were popular?"...and "McDonald's used to come in styrofoam containers?"

Ok...so maybe that does make me feel a little old...but that's not going to stop me from trying to prove that life really does begin at thirty.

Morality vs. Meat

(MEAT, continued from page 44)

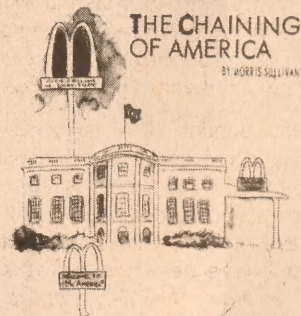
fish and veal also have frightening, depressing aspects, comparable to the treatment of cattle and pigs. The harvesting of eggs and dairy, as well, is done through inhumane processes that leave the animals sick and sometimes even kills them.

What you do from here is your choice. A vegetarian (or preferable vegan) diet is the best solution along with abstinence from animal products. This is obviously a sad situation that has been promoted by the American meat industry and furthered by an ignorant or non-caring American public. The tools to beat this are in your control.

Editor's Note: IMPACT press would like to thank Gail Eisnitz (Humane Farming Association – www.hfa.org) and Farm Sanctuary (www.farmsanctuary.com) for their assistance and permission to reprint facts and quotes used in this article. Please check out these organizations and support them. Also, for more info on vegetarian/vegan issues visit www.vegsource.com.

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THE CHAINING OF AMERICA
BY JAMES SULLIVAN

Inside:
The Death Penalty: Assessing the Punishment
Urban Legends: Of the Left and Right
School of the Americas: US Trains, International Orders

issue #20

Issue #20, Apr/May '99, Cover Story: The Chaining of America -- Also: The Death Penalty: Reassessing the Punishment, School of the Americas: Training Foreign Killers

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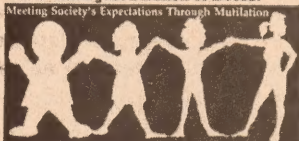
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Talking with America's Michael Moore

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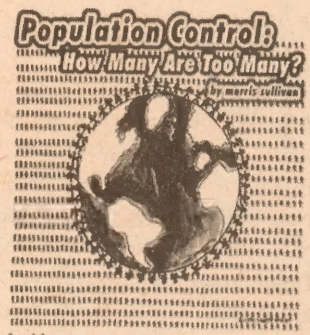
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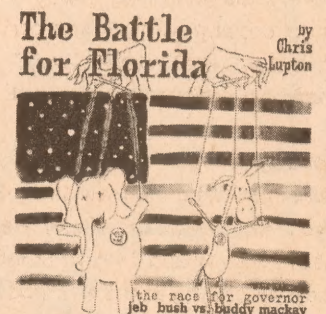
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